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THE FOUR IN SILHOUETTE
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Edward Carl Swinton

*THE SOUL IN
SILHOUETTE*



With Tracings Here and There

BY

EDWARD EARLE PURINTON

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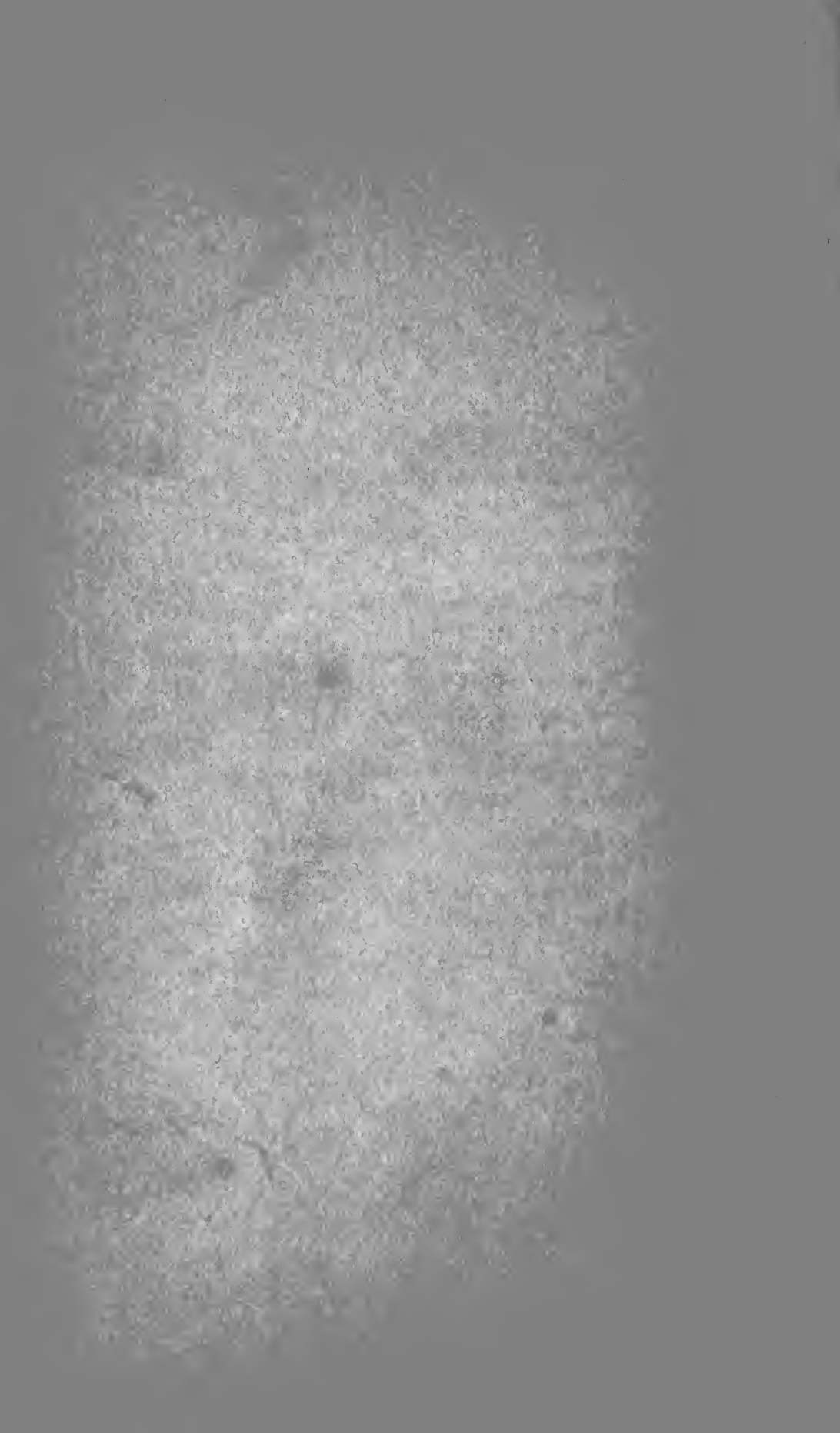
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Prelude

I sing the Soul Sublime. The world asks why.
I do not know;
Except that every flower must droop and die
Unless it grow.

And if it grow; although its stalk at first
Was scentless while
Engrossed within the soil whence blossoms burst
From vestment vile;

At last the petals render forth complete
Its fragrance hid
When men misjudged;—a spirit pure and sweet
Though weeds amid.

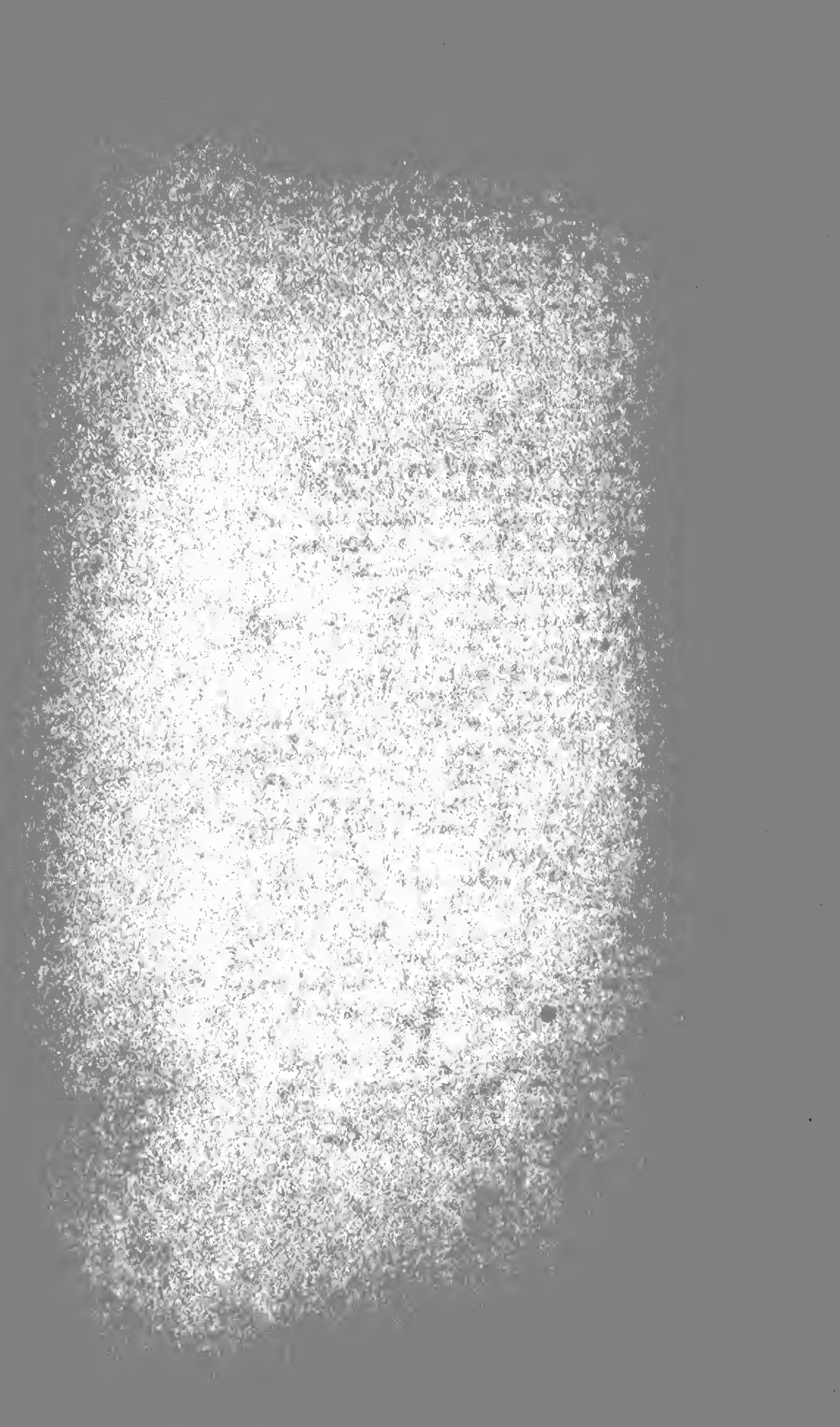
And thus the Soul of Me, if unrestrained
Must grow until
It wafts the message all the bud contained;
Where'er it will.



The Soul in Silhouette

Behind a canvas stands a maid. Behind the maid there gleams
A brilliant light whose splendor fills the room.
And yet her face upon the screen a shadow casts, that seems
To be forever veiled in deepest gloom.
The silhouette is graceful. But the roses from her cheek
Have fled, as well the sunbeams from her hair.
The lips are cold. Her face's meagre outline bids us seek
The maid herself—her charms but hinted there.

How earth-enshrouded phantoms do engage our mortal sight
Foreshadowing some entity afar.
The blackness of the form indeed epitomizes Night—
We grope—we wonder whence and what we are.
We gaze upon the shadow cast by object mortal, since
We dare not face the Light of Truth as yet;
But still each dim-limned figure with its god-like features hints
The Universal Soul in Silhouette.



The Sphinx of Purpose

He toiled from morn till night, nor ceased
 A moment from his labors.
As large as Thing he wrought, increased
 The questions of his neighbors.
The Thing was shapeless, vaguely vast;
 Unused were eyes to seeing
So huge a work—in all the past
 None like it came to being.
It was not bread, it was not wine
 They could not grasp and taste it:
So how indeed could they divine
 The plan of him who placed it?
Their idle tongues besought him then
 Who toiled in dumb submission.
Response came not—save once again
 The chisel's competition.
They looked askance at this, the Thing
 Whose very size eluding
The estimate of such as cling
 To records, kept obtruding.
The Thing that throve on labor's throes
 Grew more and more commanding;
So grew their spite—as stature rose
 Beyond their understanding.
They hoped each morning might reveal
 Some answer to their query.
Instead the evening made them feel
 The Thing became more eerie.
They lived in vain, they died in vain—
 The silence still unbroken.
But now The Sphinx of brawn and brain
 Through centuries has spoken.

They ask me why I toil? and what
 I build? And where my wages?
I answer not. I answer not.
 I answer through the ages.

Dream or Vision

A youth watched an apple fall swift to the ground.
“Now what is the law,” questioned he, “by which bound
An object falls down—and not up or around
 And falls with unerring precision?”
He wondered and pondered and troubled his head
With foolish imaginings—so the world said;
“A good-for-naught dreamer, on phantasy fed.”
 But was it a dream—or a vision?

A man saw the steam from a kettle's mouth rise.
He begged of the learned, beseeching the wise
To answer him why the steam rose to the skies.
 He met only scorn and derision;
“A grown man like you to be playing with steam!
Your feverish brain with its clouds must needs teem.
Cease wasting yourself on a profitless dream.”
 Oh, was it a dream—or a vision?

An ancient geographer pored o'er a map.
The people that passed him would grumble and gape,
And ask him what puzzle he held in his lap—
 Or was it a guide-book Elysian?
Then when he declared that the world was not flat,
They mauled him and mobbed him;—“Take this and take that,
You impudent dreamer.” Still looked he thereat;
 A dream—a mere dream—or a vision?

Just lately a youth flew a mystical kite
Uncannily gleaming though black was the night.
The neighbors, afraid of the unforeseen light
 Came angrily into collision;
“In league with the sorcerers, devils and elves,
This eerie man wanders and soars and delves,
The dreams of the madman but speak for themselves.”
 A dream—think again—or a vision?

A babe in a manger, a lad yet ungrown
Quite conscious that He was prime heir to a throne,
Declared that He owned the world—ruled it alone,
 A kingdom of joys Paradisian.
“Just hear the mad blasphemy this fellow saith.”
They mocked Him. They stoned Him. They nailed Him to death.
The dream that He voiced still possessed His last breath.
 A dream—and no more—or a vision?

O Dreamers, dream on! For your dreams are the seeds
To germinate centuries later in deeds.
Heed not the blind world whence the babble proceeds
 Confusing a dream with a vision.
Though mortals condemn, neither falter not faint;
Posterity rises to call you a saint.
Admit to your Soul the full Light, free of taint—
 Your vision—your heavenly vision!

On to Success

From off the heights of Mount Success I heard a splendid cheer—
 It sounded like “Achieve!”
 So on I sped.

But this was just the echo. For again, as I drew near
 Rang out the Voice. “Believe!”—
 It really said.

Life and Death

Life is but a longing
That thrills until it throbs;
And Death is just a dreading
That sickens as it sobs.

There is no fear that threatens
A mortal mind and heart,
But whatsoever it touches
Must fade and fall apart.

There is no hope that blossoms
Where soul of mortal dwells,
But from it you may gather
A wreath of immortelles.

The Divine Feminine

When a bard would sing, in a bard's rich rhyme
Of the thing that he loves the most,
He lifts his voice in an ode sublime
To a maiden—the poet's boast;
For in all this world there is none or naught
Whose thrill can his song refine
Expressing the Something his soul has sought
As a feminine form divine.

When a sculptor moulds the curves of grace
That bound the beauteous All,
He moulds her bosom, her arm, her face
Whose loveliness casts their thrall;
For in all this world there is no caress
When tender limbs entwine
But can aught more than its dearth confess
To a feminine form divine.

When a child has bruised his fragile flesh
And wails with a childish grief,
He hides his head in the garment's mesh
Of a mother's soft relief;
For in all this world there is no true balm
Whence smiles through sorrows shine
That dare approach to the trustful calm
Of a feminine form divine.

When a lover feels emotions fill
His being with silent bliss,
He woos with a reverent look the thrill
Of a virgin's raptured kiss;
For in all this world there is nowhere whence
There blends the mine and thine
In a Oneness like to the spirit-sense
Of a feminine Soul divine.

O Man, with your massive brain, you wait
To reason it deep and long.
While a woman feels. And the powers of Fate
With a feeling's impulse throng.
And this is the why of a thing so odd—
That men should their throne resign;—
*There is less of the human to clog the god
In the Feminine Most Divine.*

The Whisper of the Soul

When perplexities are crowding
And the world seems bleak and cold;
When your doubts and dreads are shrouding
All your hopes in gloom untold;
When the sun eludes your vision
And the skies seem far away;
When your efforts meet derision
And you fall misfortune's prey;
When your prospects cease to glisten
And your fears portentous roll;
Ah, Dear Heart, then listen, listen
For the Whisper of the Soul.

Men may speak, and men advise you
Books may yield their ancient lore,
Yet the Truth withal denies you—
You must seek for something more.
All this manifest Creation
Burst in being—star or stone,
When it heard the revelation
Of a whisper all its own.
Heeding not the things without it
Heeding but the Voice within
Life unfolding dare not doubt It;
Doubting, doubting—this is sin.
Hear and heed the gentle calling
Urging you to utmost goal;
Feel the thrill your heart entralling
Through the Whisper of the Soul.

Oh, the music in the Whisper
Of the Soul's seraphic strain;
Soft and sweet as baby lisper
Begs a kiss—nor begs in vain;
Gracious as a maiden blushing
Raptured from her first embrace;
Mighty as a torrent rushing
Unconcerned from place to place;
Silent, mute, and uncomplaining
If neglected overlong
Yet forever straining, straining
In the one amid the throng;
Voice that moves the wisest sages,
Voice that sways the truest bard,

Voice of Wisdom through the ages,
Voice of Love, our hearts to guard;
Voice that sums a god's ambition
Sweeping clean from pole to pole;
Voice whose faultless, pure rendition
Is the Whisper of the Soul.

Aspiration

The lonely forest Pine, aspiring from his early infancy to tower
aloft

Discerns above the lowly altitude
That settles down upon the vulgar brood
Of grasses, weeds and cringing herbage sheltered close in Mother
Earth's embrace so soft.

Beholding him askance whose slow and painful growth but puts
him out of touch with them,

They chatter volubly with jealous ire
Predicting such a stand a demise dire.

The Pine matured abides exalted. Long ago the herbage with-
ered—root and stem.

The lonely Human Soul that lifts his longing eyes and yearns to
dwell where all is Light

Must vision far beyond the common throng;
And whilst they jostle hurriedly along

On transitory pleasures bent, must his horizon cloudless keep—
the end in sight.

A thousand maledictions, persecutions let the herd that cannot
understand

Heap hard upon thee, splendid-sighted Soul;—
Deep oceans of oblivion shall roll

Above their lives forgotten, when at last the Universal thou hast
nobly spanned.

Dawn

In the silence
Mystic silence
Of the dim and dusky morn,
Love has blended
All the splendid
Prospects of a day unborn.

Lightly looming
Darkness dooming
From Aurora's matin feast,
Love revealing
Paints Love's feeling,
Tints the zenith, gilds the East.

Far from caring
With whom sharing
Brilliant jewels of the day,
Love arrays her,
Love displays her
After Love's impulsive way.

Worlds lay hidden
Still unbidden
Yet to lift their dewy face;
Till Love lit them.
Till Love fit them
Thus to shine with Love's glad grace.

Shadows darkling,
Dewdrops sparkling
Blend to beautify the earth.
Sunbeams seeing
Moonbeams fleeing
Dance with glee at sunbeams' birth.

From their sleeping
Creatures creeping
Crawling, flying, greet the light;
Through with homing
Now for roaming
Spend the strength restored by night.

Dreams chaotic,
Spells narcotic
Hazy, misty, unexplained
Fading, fading,
Fast abrading
All their outlines, lose them—feigned.

Dreamland's plunder
Piled in wonder
Sinks, and sinking is no more.
Fancies fleeting,
Films depleting
Dread the day, and upward soar.

In their slumber
Men still cumber
Weary minds with foolish fret;
Feel the falling
Of the palling
Of the night with blind regret.

But the paining
Of the waning
Of the nooning of the mind
Is a blessing,
Which confessing
Humans must its fruitage find.

Skyward soaring,
Hopes restoring
Through the ether's mystic void,
Finds man's spirit
Means to cheer it
That the day has not enjoyed.

Up, up yonder
Spirits wander
Newly nourished from the sky;
In the morning
Minds adorning
With a freshness born on high.

So be grateful
To the fateful
Flitting fancies of the dusk;
Whither leading
Souls proceeding
Leave at night their bodies' husk.

Whence returning
They discerning
Part the clouds and thrill things numb;
Creatures drooning
Hear them crooning
"Wake and work! For Day has come."

A Magic Secret

There are folks forever frowning,
Life's delights so deeply drowning
In the teary dark recesses hid by gloomy jutting brow,
That their vision fills with ghastly
Ghostly spectres rising vastly
From the frowning, weeping chasm gulping pleasure in its slough.

There are other people smiling,
Joys upon each other piling
In the wrinkly little hollows where a smile is wont to play;
And to look at them you never
Would imagine that they ever
Had a blessed thing to do but smile and coo the livelong day.

Now I know a little secret
That is good for all the week, yet
On a dismal dark blue Monday, 'twould excel in magic wile;
Slip the frown a little lower
From the brow it lingers o'er
With a sudden twist just turn it round your lips—and there's a
smile.

The Making of Time

“Why do you grieve?”
Hope said to Sorrow;
“Time’s glad reprieve
Comes with the morrow.”

“For those who mourn,”
Sobbed sad-eyed Sorrow,
“Memory’s bourn
Suffers no morrow.”

Naught—at the last
Is to-day or to-morrow,
Save what from the Past
Or the Future we borrow.

Whatever is Earthy

I stroked the soft petals enfolding a rose
Whose cheek with the welcome of Summerland glows.
The song of its soul into harmony stirred
My heart with a rapture too fine for a word.
My spirit responded, and blended, and yearned
To cherish the fragrance whose thrill it discerned;
But fading and fading and withering fast
The petals resolved into ruin at last.
And as the sweet soul of the flower took wing
It seemed to my listening longing to sing:—
*“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”*

I gathered possessions, I hoarded more gold
Than Capital’s coffers expanded could hold.
With bonds and securities, chattels and stocks
I thought to obtain the one key that unlocks
The wealth of a Universe waiting to pour
On him who possessing sought more and still more.
But Failure o’ertook me. And at Failure’s side
Lean Poverty stalked, first to rob, then deride.
Between them they snatched my last pauperish pence
Then eerily echoed, ere tottering hence;—
*“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”*

I fondled my child—a mere babe at the breast.
I watched her mature with a joy self-confessed.
I planned her a future eclipsing the sun.
But, ah, just before her life-work was begun
The Angel of Death cut her down in her bloom—
To prove how mortality speeds to its doom.
Bemoaning the close of the maid’s bright career
I watched her as marble stretched stiff in her bier;
Beseeching the heavens my eyes seemed to see
Transcribed by the angels, this fateful decree:—
*“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”*

I filled endless archives with ponderous books.
My library bordered with ruminant nooks
Invited mad worry to banish its care
And dazzle the brain with the brilliances there.
I buried the past in a book-lover’s grave—
As if the dead pages were able to save.

But feverish fancies despoiled my hot brain
Exposing the scars of my sorrow and pain.
My brain overwrought, heard through all its wild whirl
The leaves, as I thumbed them, so scornfully curl;—
“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”

I summoned my friends into revelry’s hall.
I sought in its vintage to blur the black pall
That settled and settled and blotted my life
With shadows of dread of oblivion rife.
I jested and sang and heaped high the glib cup
Of merriment meaningless. Dine then and sup
And laugh with a leer that the devils would shun
Till day with its deadening damning is done.
Then hear in the watches of night a ghost wail
This sentence uncanny to make your heart quail;—
“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”

I flung me insane at a mountain of work.
Expected that in its recesses must lurk
Some balm for my spirit, some peace for my heart.
When once I fell idle a twitch and a start
Reminded again that a memory mad
Was waiting to trap me. Until I turned glad
To lose me in toil. But my sinews grew thin.
My senses aquiver with labor’s wild din
Betrayed me and mocked me and strove to proclaim
That warning monotonous, ever the same:—
“Whatever is earthy partakes of earth’s blight.
’Twas born in a day. ’Twill die in a night.”

I yielded to Sorrow. She stripped my life lorn
Of all the bright baubles that used to adorn;
I felt my friends slipping, my happiness o’er
While yesterday’s hopes seemed to beckon no more.
I scanned the black sky for a token of day—
Dim Dawn was still hiding in darkness away.
But list! a monition thrilled low to instil
Fresh courage and hope in my impotent will;
I hearkened to the Voice. And a whisper came soft
To comfort me, buoy me, and bear me aloft;—
*“Whatever is earthless forever remains
At peace with Itself till Eternity wanes.”*

The Three Paths

“Indulge!” shouts the glutton, the sot, the roué,
“For pleasure is sure,—and it lasts but a day.
Let merriment spill from the wine of life’s brim.
Come, watch the lights sparkle—though vision be dim
With dews of the morning or shades of the night,
Since swift on the heels of the dawn flees the light.
Let passion run red. Let Flesh be our God.
Ere swift we return, whence we came, to the sod.”

“Renounce!” shrieks the monk, the ascetic, the sage,
“With youth comes Desire—but Wisdom with age.
The wants of the body are beastly and bad;
So turn from your chamberings wantonly mad,
Your appetites, flesh-pots, your instincts to lust
Ere Punishment damn you and doom you to dust.
For bodies are sired of the Devil—while souls
Are fathered of God, who exacts His just tolls.”

“Exalt!” cries the spirit illumined and pure,
“The God of Desire. Let all longing endure.
Enjoy the grosser—but lift it on high,
Refine your delights till they blend with the sky.
For tasteless and touchless and formless are joys
Whose ecstasy clings, and yet never once cloys.
The world is a Paradise. Enter and sip
Its waters ambrosial. But first—*cleanse the lip.*”

An Episode Among the Planets

Mother Earth lay lonely weeping
In the early morning light.
For her sister, snugly sleeping
By her side throughout the night

Was with break of day fast fading—
Mistress Moon had fled abashed
As King Sun, his pomp parading,
On her gaze his splendor flashed.

Mother Earth lay there a-sighing
Face all tearful with her rue—
Which some thoughtless folk espying
Call the tears but morning dew.

When His Royal Sunship riding
Sumptuous among the clouds
Caught a glimpse of beauty hiding
In the face her sorrow shrouds,

Gently then from clouds descending
Softly sped the Solar Lord,
Brought to speedy, happy ending
All the gloom he so abhorred.

For he boldly kissed the grieving
Tearful Earth at break of day.
At his touch the tears kept leaving—
Till he kissed them all away.

And they say that every growing
Fragrant flower and luscious fruit
Lies in dimpled hollow, showing
Where she smiled upon his suit.

Paid by the Day

His forehead was furrowed, his brow tightly knitted
His cheek deeply sunken, his eye dull and dim;
His coat, frayed and shiny, his form poorly fitted—
A form that appeared but the shadow of him.
His step automatic propelled a dead creature
That sambled about with a crawl and a creep;
His listless demeanor showed always some feature
That could but remind you of something asleep.
My heart deeply grieving, his footsteps I followed
And watched him at last to a desk stiffly climb;—
A desk that his skeleton elbows had hollowed
And marked with the dents of endurance sublime.
A look of despair crossed a face bleak and cheerless,
All ashen and cold with the sorrows of years
And yet with its anguish so stony and tearless,—
For tears turn to ice when grief genuine nears.
His lips replied not to my unspoken question,
His brain must concentrate to earn his scant pay.
His soul, though, made answer, amid its congestion;
“A word explains all—I am *paid by the day.*”

“With figures and facts in black myriads trooping
Forever I cipher and cipher away
While still I sit stooping and stifing and drooping,
For I am a chattel—and paid by the day.
Through ten weary hours, ten hours together,
Of sunshine and shadow, here shackled I stay;
The sunshine infuses the outer world’s weather—
The shadows are his who is paid by the day.
The hours that throb their slow march o’er the dial
Appear with the sun to yield Hope a faint ray,
But morrows and yesterdays make grim denial—
For hours are endless when paid by the day.
I once had a brain and a heart and a longing
And hopes fitted past me to brighten my way,
But stringent and strident necessities thronging
Have choked the soul dumb in him paid by the day.
There once was a time when my thought to things higher
Than figuring fallacies tended to stray;
But backward I drew it—no man dare aspire
When chained to a consciousness paid by the day.
A brain automatic; a hand ever steady:
A spirit content not to dream or to play;
Instead, with a willingness never unready

To slave for its deadening pay by the day.
Existence a grind and your wage but a pittance
Enough just to keep your sad soul in its clay
While time with its clangingly cold unremitance
Oppresses and maddens him paid by the day.
Though spirit be fainting and body be halting,
Still on you must race in the victorless fray.
Your time is your master's. Your wage is defaulting—
He durst not be ill who is paid by the day.”

“I rise in the morning—my soul the while falling
And pleading and sobbing as souls alone may.
For harshly and hatefully Duty is calling,
That taskmaster Duty who pays by the day.
I sink in the evening—but not to sweet sleeping
Black spectres foreboding loom up in array
Portentously shuddering! chills of fear creeping
Congealing the hope in me paid by the day.
The gamins that grovel, mere waifs in the alley
Have naught but their vagrancy's voice to obey.
Let me though—a man—for a brief moment dally,
Then swift the thought goads—‘You are paid by the day.’
The bird and the flower, in fields bright and sunny
Unfold their souls' sweetness with none to say nay.
But they have not learned the vast value of money
That gilds an aggrandizement paid by the day.
My spirit grows deaf with the dollars' loud clinking
Whose avalanche brooks neither doubt nor delay.
In goblets of gold their frail health they are drinking.
They? Not they who toil and are paid by the day.
The creature that buys my lean soul has his pleasure—
A plutocrat's pomp with a showman's display.
But ah, his great coffers heaped high could not measure
The sorrows of families paid by the day.
My children are human as well as my neighbor's,
My wife is as noble—and none can gainsay.
Yet let them all starve. While the fruits of my labors
Are swallowed by him who pays me by the day.”

“Ah, whence can I hope in my madness to borrow
Some sympathy's boon for which only I pray?
Since men must provide for their own meagre morrow
They cannot befriend whom they pay by the day.
The world heeds me not. It is busy devising
Some means whence its profits more ponderous weigh—
Save when it is occupied deeply despising

The plight of a thing scanty paid by the day.
The moralists urge me to keep my eyes straining
Both outward and onward, and upward alway;
But forces without and beyond are disdain
And Heaven is haze to him paid by the day.
No more do I find bits of comfort accruing
By looking within. For my soul must inveigh
With turmoil both righteous and wroth the pursuing
Of demons incarnate that pay by the day.
I close my eyes then. Let my vision slow blinding
Grow numb with the senses that all must decay
And atrophy wholly beneath the dead binding
Of pressure external that pays by the day.
The Infinite Spirit within me is pleading
But I must forever its earnest betray.
Who cares for a god when his being is bleeding
With anguish untold? Does God pay by the day?
A piece of accoutrement shaped for the battle
That Greed fights with Greed till the world has grown grey
A mindless and soulless and spiritless chattel—
This chattel the Devil still pays by the day.”

Doubt's Unreason

If now and then a cloud obscure the Sun
Do I, construing that its course is run,
Declare the solar system out of place
And swift effacement threatening the race?

If now and then a doubt obstruct my view—
To passing cloud in mortal vision due,
Shall I conclude that Truth has lost its light
And God interred the world in endless night?

Understanding

The beggar moaned without the gate.
He cursed his lot, that cruel Fate
Had left him there in rags to wait
 While Wealth within lay sleeping.
The night was raw. The wind blew chill.
He plead and plead and plead until
His voice became a wail. But still
 Upon him Death came creeping.

“Dear Lady, give me just a crust!
'Tis life I beg—so beg I must.
For Death is close. And o'er my dust
 The snows will soon be falling.”
Yet on she slumbered deep and long.
No beggar—nor the passing throng
Could waken her; be right or wrong
 The manner of the calling.

Then suddenly a voice rang out
In tones that bore no trace of doubt
As from afar a joyous shout
 Betokened some one coming.
It was the Master's homeward stride.
He flashed a key—the door swung wide;
He kissed his lovely virgin bride
 Nor felt the winds benumbing.

Within the walls a soft caress,
A look—a kiss—a touch to bless
A man and make his soul confess
 That Heaven has descended.
Without the walls, a freezing form
That gasps and grovels in the storm
And starves for want of something warm
 Till life's despair has ended.

Without a woman's soul there pleads
To sate his body's grosser needs
A man who, begging, intercedes—
 Her passion's throb demanding.
Within a woman's soul there lies
A lover, for whose touch she cries;
He owns her love. Nor begs nor buys.
 The Key is “Understanding.”

The Mystic Isle of Sex

A beautiful stream in the woodland is flowing
Where flowers are growing,
And Nature, bestowing
Her smiles and caresses, sends breezes that blowing
From out the South Summer Land sweeten the air.

The stream in the course of its eddyings winding,
A spot of land finding,
Its narrow bed binding—
A verdure-clad island its vista thus blinding
Its separates then, to each bayou a share.

But on past the island, the branches uniting
Their ripples inviting,
Are speedily righting
The brief incompleteness they felt when first sighting
That island that cuts the one stream into two.

The stream we call Life from the Infinite rushing
Its barriers flushing
Its obstacles crushing
Discovers an island. Though flowers are blushing,
Yet serpents are brewing their venomous rue.

The Isle is so mystic men scarce can discern it
Nor study, nor learn it;
So many would spurn it
That soon a drear waste the race human must turn it
Did not some brave soul dare to fathom its shore.

As if to escape the dark wiles of its wonder
Two bayous that sunder,
Plunge over, delve under
Divide the one stream. And dividing they thunder
Their mad discontent till united once more.

The Isle is called Sex. It enchants with rare flowers
Whose fragrance endowers
Ecstatic the hours
While visitors tarry, held thrall'd in its bowers.
Yet serpents are hiding—beware their dread fangs.

The stream known as Woman flows placid forever.
 But currents that sever
 The Man-stream can never
Be trusted for transport, save through strong endeavor;
Else ruin ensues—how the knell of it clangs!

Upon this dim island have errors erected
 And usage protected
 And churchlings elected
A wall so forbidding its ban has effected
Complete isolation from either lone side.

And Life, cut in two, flows with surging foreboding
 Its twin-banks corroding
 Its twin-impulse goading
Its twin-soul with separate anguish o'erloading
The wastes of the shore with the wrecks of the tide.



Some day eons hence, an upheaval will shatter
 The heaps of earth-matter
 Whose clods of clay scatter
Their cloy o'er the Isle. In this period latter,
The Isle shall subside with a crash and a groan.

Then Woman and Man once again sweetly blended,
 Duality ended,—
 Sex wholly transcended—
Shall merge their twin-Self from the Source first intended
To flow a Finality, One and Alone.

Speechless

I have searched the Universe through and through
For words to tell you, Dear,
Of the beautiful vision that greets my view
When you have nestled near.

I had heard from a poet that roses lent
Their tint to a woman's cheek,
So straight to the garden's bloom I went
The secret there to seek.

With a trembling hope I softly stooped
And for the favor plead;
But the petals fell and the flower drooped—
The lovely tint had fled.

Perhaps the lily was like your throat
For thus I had also heard;
From its fragrant lips might burst some note
With faint descriptive word.

But the lily's touch is hard and cold
And never a bit like yours;
Its calm, severe, ascetic mould
Scant sympathy assures.

Where the limpid waters flowed along
I sought your scented breath;
For a maid but echoes their silver song—
The bard so plainly saith.

A defiant splash was the answer curt
Of eddies swirling past.
If ever they paused 'twas but to flirt—
Embraced by the sea at last.

But surely the stars illumed your eyes
So lovers all agreed;
And eagerly I scanned the skies—
My quest was vain indeed,—

The stars just twinkled and winked and smiled;
With never a glance so true
As to make me think of the evenings whiled
Just looking, Love, at you.

There is nothing in all God's perfect Plan
That more than shadows ill
Her presence who inspires a man
To feel the lover's thrill.

And yet, although I cannot frame
The words to speak my thought,
We two need not a verbal name
In printed texture wrought.

For when your throat and cheek caress
My lips—and linger there;
And while you whisper low to bless
Unspeakably; my prayer

To be more worthy rises mute
And meets your eyes—and then
Just you and God and I refute
The words required of men.

To Her Who Feels

A thousand medley sounds may throng a harp. And yet
It answers not.
Insulted then they feel a sort of crude regret;
They wonder what
Illusive spell has seized the thing; that it should lie
Inert and dumb
The while their voices gutturally coarse may cry—
Whose souls are numb.

But let a note from any single instrument
Attuned in pitch
Approach the harp. Then suddenly the harp has blent
Its music rich
In glad response to one wee understanding tone.
The screeching mob
Withdraw in rough disgust and leave the two alone—
Whose souls can throb.

Through many clanging years I seemed to all my friends
A sullen thing.
For they, of childish aims and inharmonious ends
Had failed to bring
A touch attuned. But you with all your poet's heart
Once happened near;
And now I fling my joyous, free, melodious Art
From sphere to sphere.

Let There Be Light

“Let There Be Light!” The Heaving Void has calmed its incoherent cries and speaks.
And through the shoreless, soundless seas of space, one world upon another creaks
In huge embroiling effort to obey. Vast waves of anxious ether roll
Tumultuous amid the spectral stars, demanding as their trifling toll
A single glimmer from the cycling spheres—to satisfy the stern command
Of that resounding, thrilling Cosmic Voice, by breath of ceaseless motion fanned.
The piercing mandate cleaves dark orbits grim where nebulae revolve disturbed
Lest some blind planet whirling by collide, and thus their onward course be curbed;
Deep echoes vibrate forth the clarion call throughout the awful spanless bound
That forms the realm of unsensed Omnipresence. As the strange unheard-of sound
First strikes relentless on the cumbered ear of atoms, with audition dulled—
From hearing through a million ages past mere rumblings aimless and annulled—
Each speck of star-dust leaps exulting, wild to realize its dream of Light,
While myriads of mighty molecules have danced ecstatic in their flight;
Stupendous joy commoves the nascent suns from common chaos just emerged,
As through each orb impatient long to shine a pulse of new-born power has surged.
Thus eagerly their energies they bend to halo every mote in reach,
But tardy lags the Light and still no gleam illumines the dismal, endless breach.
Together in a cataclysmic clash—a strain that seems to rupture space
The Universe is tossing back and forth, to find some wee secluded place
Where just one ray of light appears afar. The face of all Creation weeps
With torrents teeming mingled hope and fear. A flood of sweaty anguish steps

In hotter haste and yet more frantic pain the monumental tra-
vail-throes
Of Mother Cosmos. Soon the muttering roar of hurtling worlds
to madness grows
And swift destruction threatens all that is. But still the black
eternal Night
Enshrouding deeper unborn worlds, defies the Voice that bade it
yield to Light.

* * * * *

“Let There Be Light.” A tiny wingéd thing discerns the crisis
falling fast—
Bethinks himself to second God’s command. And Lo! effulgent
breaks at last
A glory clothing all the mortal race. The Universe sobs glad
relief.
And as the chorus swells, I ask the mite his secret. His reply
comes brief;—
“There never was a time when Light was not, in spite of theories
men devise.
But splendors paled unseen—since God was blind; until forsooth
I gave Him eyes.”

Hope Ever Shining

Twisting its way through the stones and the stubble
Rising unwelcome before it,
Finds the crude worm a world jutting with trouble,
Since for its keep it must bore it.
Breasting the breeze, the world’s care overthrowing,
Soars the fleet bird gladly trilling,
Sees but the beckoning orbs ever glowing,
Wings its repose to their thrilling.

HOPE is a star that transcends our attaining—
Merged in reality never;
Shining yet on us some eminence gaining,
Lighting us upward forever.

Sloughed in the dark of a light-bereft valley,
Stumbling and trembling and groping
Gross mortal minds with their wallowing dally,
Weighed by the vainness of hoping.

Heed not their slough or their dubitant story
Mired in a finite infernal.
Keep your eye fixed on the visions of glory
Fulsome from Hope shed eternal.

The Kiss

I kissed you first upon the hand—
 A queenly hand;
The softest one in all the land
 To wield command
Of human souls that come and go
When you, My Lady, will it so,
Permitting adulation's flow
 In granting this
 Admirer's Kiss.

I kissed you then upon the brow—
 I made a vow
That if you only would allow
 Me near you now,
Henceforth I should be at your call
To guard you, Sister—that is all
Nor let your charms my heart enthrall.
 Quite safe, I wis,
 That Brother's Kiss.

I kissed you then upon the cheek—
 You were so meek
So helpless that I fain would seek—
 And thus bespeak
Some deeper interest in you, Dear—
A place where dimples might appear
In children's cheeks. No need to fear;
 'Twere not amiss—
 A Father's Kiss.

I kissed you then with tongue on tongue—
 A kiss that stung
That burned our lips, while Passion wrung
 The plea it flung;
"Come closer, Love—Love, *Love!*" Until
We felt the wild ecstatic thrill
Of Heaven's rapture that can fill
 All Hell's abyss—
 The Lover's Kiss.

I kissed you then upon the breast.
 And in the West
The sun was setting where the blest
 Abide at rest.

While o'er my soul the peace that fell
Transported me to heights where dwell
The angels, far from mortal spell.
Love's crowning bliss
Is Baby's Kiss.

Both Lover and Friend

When first my eyes beheld your winsome grace, a host
Of longings sprung
Impetuous within my breast to make my boast—
As bards have sung—
That I, your lover, might enchant and charm you most.
For I was young;
And then it seemed to me that you and I alone
Were all the world.
When other suitors pressed to make your love their own
With hopes unfurled,
I fain had heard them from the depths of ruin groan
By envy hurled.
I clung to you, and fought for you, and prayed that I
Might crown you queen.
Exalting you above the Love that broods on high
I strove to wean
Your heart away from all your friends. My ceaseless sigh
To come between.

But now 'tis not enough to touch your hand and feel
The lover's thrill;
And through my raptured being sense the godhood steal
Ecstatic—fill
My soul with all the Heaven gods could ask. Your weal;
Your woman's will;
Your aspirations; and your soul's success; these need
A something more
Than gave a lover blinded by his tender greed
In days of yore.
'Mid many lovers *let me be a friend.* Whose lead
Above, before,
You trust and follow to your life's consummate end.
I thrill with you
Because our souls' desire is one. And I would lend
My judgment true.

So call me Lover, Dear, but more;—esteem me Friend.
For friends are few.

A Vision of the Night

Amid the deep shroud of the dead of the night
Whose vestige of light
Had fled from my sight

A Vision appeared. And as its form neared
I saw it was clad in a glistre of white.

They trembled and twitched—my poor sleep-heavy eyes
With dread that denies
The truth it espies,
And strives to return to lethargy, spurn
The brilliance to blame for dull torpor's surprise.

“Sink back to your sleep!” cried the sprites of the West
Whose blackness confessed
Their earthiness. “Lest
To-morrow you shirk your drudgery work
Since weary and worn and deprived of your rest.”

“Awake and behold!” from the East rang the word
Of power that stirred
My senses that heard
And bade me awake though dawn itself break
To witness my woe for the hours I had erred.

Still thickly benumbed my slumbered once more;
But all the earth o'er
I *felt* the Light pour
Its radiance illumine the last shade of gloom
And beckon my spirit forever to soar.

“O who can you be,” I sobbed, “who indeed
That sightless you lead
Me on whence proceed
The rays of the morn; ere dawn can adorn
The earth and the sky with the sunlight they need?”

The Vision replied: “My name is not known
To mortals who moan
That they must alone
And lonely observe my outlines, nor swerve
From things I reveal in the dead of night shown.”

I followed the Light to the crest where it led
My bruised limbs bled
I wandered unfed
Unclothed and unkept by humans who slept
Interred in their somnolence deep as the dead.

The work of the morrow I wholly forgot.
It mattered not what
Remotely lone spot
My spirit must seek. Still up loomed the peak
Attainment that urged me press on, and pause not.
At last the bleak summit I reached weak and worn
With vesture all torn.
I heard my friends mourn
Below in the vale. Where, drowsily pale
They clung to what I *to be crowned must be shorn.*
Then—wonder of wonders—forever away
Earth's night passed. Broad day
Revealed an array
Of glories that I ne'er saw in the sky
While I below lingered to work or to play.

The Vision had faded. But still brighter yet
Above my regret
My raptured sight met
A message from God. "Until you had trod
The heights of abandonment, suns must all set."
"The Vision you saw was a foregleam I cast
O'er present and past
That flickering fast
Souls see who aspire. Come higher, come higher!
Forget your Soul's dawn. Lo, the sun shines at last."

A Sure Remedy

I've a secret, Dear, to tell you,
Cross my heart, I tell you true.
And I hope it may impel you
Just to watch it work for you.
Now's the very time to try it—
Now and always after this;
Then if you would like to buy it
You can pay me with a kiss.
When a fear or doubt or worry
Comes to bother you again
Till your brain's all fret and flurry;
Don't you ask advice of men.
Don't you wonder what's the reason,
But before the clock says "tick"—
Here's the secret right in season,
Just you *love somebody—quick.*

Only a Worm

“Only a worm!”—exclaimed the man
As he crushed the mite in the Maker’s Plan.
But eons hence must the man atone;
For lo the worm to a god full-grown
Shall teach the man, at Judgment Day
That Life is one, and ’tis Self we slay.

Humanity's Prisoners

Angrily foreboding, with a sullen snarl that tells
How a heart ferocious through the growling mutter swells;
Gnashing on his jagged teeth in mighty rage unkempt;
Lashing bristling tail from which no object seems exempt;
Swaying tawny body like a tower in a storm;
Hate and lust exhaling from his gaunt and hungry form;
Circles mountain Lion in his artificial den,
Pouring out his loathing on the gaping sons of men.
Lordly in the forest, here he froths at ironed shame
Impotently panting for the freedom whence he came.

Pitifully beating eager wings against the bars—
Frenziedly unmindful of the smarting wounds whose scars
Add to one another deeper witness to the crime
Where a cage discordant robs the woodland's choral chime;
Pale and sick and sorrowful, a Birdling plaintive peeps,
Pleading with a restlessness that never lulls nor sleeps;
Hoping spite of vanished hopes to reach again the nest
Whence a man marauder snatched this childie from the rest.
All the tender sweetness long ago has left her voice,
Now the note of sobbing is the songster's only choice.

Massively inert, cowed dumb, all powerless there lies
Caged as yet a mighty force that passers-by despise.
In the brain of man a fettered Mind awaits the day
When that jailer Ignorance shall die and yield his sway.
In the human heart confined a bird is pining too
Known as Love—her jailer Fear. She pleads with me and you.

Who will break the cruel thrall and set the prisoners free;
Then discern what their Creator meant the two to be?

The Soul of a Flower

A tulip and a violet were growing side by side.
The violet lay lowly. But the tulip flaunted wide
Her coarse plebeian petals that, coquetting with the sun,
Compelled a heightened color at the notice she had won
Through beauty's dower.

A maiden passed along that way, in search of fragrant bloom.
A little maid of charity—she helped to cheer the gloom
Of dreary army hospitals where dying soldiers lay,
Tormented with the memories of men they strove to slay
By brutish power.

Not once a single glance gave she to charms of tulip bold.
But tenderly she felt among the tangled moss and mold
To where the little violet was hiding—all unseen,
While pouring forth her perfume with her wonted modest mien,
Each hour by hour.

Her body bruised and broken, soon the violet lay dead
Within the maiden's grasp. And then the brilliant tulip said,
"You foolish little flower, it is plain as plain can be
That you should have asserted more of self. Just look at me—
I never cower."

The tulip hung there till it rotted on its withered stem.
The dying soldiers smiled—while souls of violets wafted them
To realms where waves of fragrance out from God's own presence
roll.

For the petal is the body, but the perfume is the soul
Of every flower.

Missing the Mark

The master bowman wings his arrows true.
His matchless skill
Had pierced the finest target through and through
Transfixed at will.
But let the sun withdraw its limpid light;
Let shadows fall
That swiftly merge in gloom the nascent night
Till black the pall
Of total darkness wraps the earth in shroud;
No archer then
Can lift from off his arms the cumbrous cloud
Whose burden men
Must bear until another dawning day.
If now his bow
He turn and twang toward what had been his prey
The shaft falls low
And wide the mark; for Night has clutched his hand,
Obscured the goal,
And made the master marksman lose command
Of skill's control.

So likewise fails at times the Soul of us
Its prize to win.
When mental midnight clouds its action thus,
We call it sin.
But sin is merely missing some one mark
The Soul has set.
And that because there broods yon shadow dark;
Then why regret?
For just as men must tread the cycle round
Of dusk and dawn
Before the Timeless have their efforts crowned
Of brain and brawn;
So night and day must ever alternate
With sure return
Upon the Soul that aims at lofty Fate
Some boon to earn.
Rebuke you not—if once your aim have failed;
By sin depressed;
But,—till your knowledge-dawn shall have prevailed
Lie still, and rest.

The Self-Accusing Verdict

The painting was fearlessly bare of a film of a robe to enmesh
In shaméd obscurity the curves of her form or the tints of
her flesh.

Her bosom, her cheek and her limbs were so rounded and whole-
some and sweet

That taken together the charms of all Womanhood scarce could
compete.

The truth was portrayed from arcana most sacred vouchsafed to
the race—

Divinity shone from the ground at her feet to the crown o'er her
face.

The multitude passing pronounced its opinion in tones that I
heard

With emphasis challenging, spite of the fact that they said not
a word.

“How shameful!” declared a lean spinster, her visage bespeaking
the prude,

“To show to the public a figure so wantonly, shamelessly nude.

I sigh for my sex that a creature thus brazen, immoral and bold
Should pose in impurity's nakedness, waiting for men to behold.
'Tis wicked to gaze on a sight so unclothed, so unchaste, so
unclean;

I flee from a vision whose outlines defile and pollute and be-
mean.”

“How luscious!” he cried with the full-orbed perceptions, the
passion of youth

That sensed the mere form but evaded the essence and spirit of
Truth.

“My blood rises hot—and my manhood leaps up and my heart is
on fire

To clasp to my breast and to thrill, through and through, the
fair maid I desire.

For woman was meant but to satisfy wholly my manhood's de-
mand—

Oh, that she might spring from the canvas and follow the lead
of my hand.”

Two lovers passed by. They were husband and wife, yet
avowed lovers still.

They looked at the form standing mute with its judgment. A
great divine thrill

Of soul-understanding united them both in a thought that spoke
not.

All words are but shadows. Which falling must hide and dis-
figure and blot
The soul that looks sunward. They knew what it was to sense
passion—and yet
Their love was so pure that its fullest expression left not one
regret.
Amid the dumb multitude lazing along with a somnolent nod,
Illumined these two murmured low in one whisper, "The Image
of God."

Fulfilling the Great Command

A thousand priests may creep their painful way to distant gilded
shrine
To venerate a sacred bone;—
And God can scarce withhold reproving frown. A blasphemous
design—
By marrow-wasting to atone.

A band of thoughtless zealots labeled Christ may vainly proselyte
A race of totem-minded blacks;—
And God but weeps in pity that His servants hypnotized by fright
Ecstatic, self-deluded wax.

A little child may fling a careless drop of water on a rose
Just budding into gracious bloom;—
And God transported in a wave of joy His presence sweet bestows
Through every petal's fresh perfume.

For lo, the God of countless planets sleeping in the flower abides
Until full-blown the fragrance wakes.
The "Logos" is but Self-expression. He obeys who, where God
hides,
With Christlike touch the casement breaks.

Return to Nature

"Return to Nature." 'Tis a graceful phrase
But signifying little in the saying
Until we thread the deep, perplexing maze
That Naturism seems to be displaying.

To bare a body naked to the sun;
To live upon the rudiment essentials;
To eat and sleep and die the while you shun
Refinement with her gentle consequentials;
To forage for a bit of tardy food;
And then to win it only by a battle;
To watch your footsteps lest their crunch intrude
And hostile missiles somewhence rudely rattle;
To prowl about and scurry fleet away
In terror lest you be with spoils detected;
To sulk and growl and rage the livelong day
When earnest effort fails since misdirected;
To keep a ferret vigilance on foes;
To face exposed the most ferocious weather;
To share with none your pleasures or your woes;
To seek in vain scant cover from the heather;
To have no home but where you skulk at night;
To own no ties you may not roughly sever;
To crouch at every sound from out the light;
To drag a restless, aimless life forever;
To wander here and there with none to care;
To stretch a shaggy limb upon the mountain;
To wallow in a cold, uncanny lair;
To lap with lurid tongue from forest fountain;
To feel that you exist for you alone;
To live upon your prey, perforce made selfish;
To champion no cause but just your own;
To hide in hermit haunt till fairly elfish;
To know your dormant soul though sprung from God
Is choked and dumb for lack of true expression;
To grunt and growl and nose amid the sod
The while your hungry heart demands progression;
To browse upon the stubble near the earth
For food whereby your body may be nourished,
Unconscious that the husk at seedling's birth
Involved a Something whence your soul has flourished;
To lead in short a desultory life
With sun and shadow, joy and sorrow blended
Perhaps in peace, perhaps in bloody strife

Till savage Death has all your struggles ended;
To be but one among the countless horde
Of vulgar beings unevolved for ages;
To halt content while others hasten toward
The Honor Roll in Michael's glistening pages;—
Is *this* Return to Nature? If it be
We imitate the traits of brutes most bestial
And retrograde throughout Eternity.
For even beasts are facing heights celestial.

To roam at will the fragrant, flowering fields;
To nestle near the tender dear Earth Mother;
To care for no protection if it shields
By sacrificing some less able brother;
To eat the luscious fruit the fields supply
Or eat it not,—in lack or fulness wealthy;
To scorn the drug, the knife, the occult eye,
From but the dew's elixir springing healthy;
To welcome forms divinely bare—and yet
To prize the lace a lovely arm adorning;
To watch the shadows fall without regret;
To greet the splendid sunrise every morning;
To draw a rythmic, calm, refreshing breath;
To revel in a solitude quite soundless;
To know no fear, not even that of Death;
To claim as yours by right possessions boundless;
To let the breezes kiss responsive flesh;
To range abroad supreme in your dominion;
To cast the last externals that enmesh;
To gambol free of popular opinion;
To make no marriage save your love impel;
To hold aloof from clannish, family feeling;
To bear no child but that desired full well;
To need no counsel to your Soul's revealing;
To act on impulse, reckless of result;
To trust the ready instinct that imbues you;
To glory in your freedom and exult
To court Desire whose prescient hopes enthuse you;
To ridicule dependence on a friend;
To seek no mystic doctor, lawyer, preacher;
To lord the heights of Selfhood you ascend;
to make the starry firmament your teacher;
To laugh at laws and penalties for crime;
To scratch the statutes off the earth, save only
That single mandate with its sense sublime

“To thine own Self be true,”—and dare be lonely;
To know that education means unfold;
To break instinctively whatever fetters;
To face tradition’s dictum, calmly bold;
To study laws of life—not laws of letters;
To honor Nature’s cause in happy hymns;
To realize that Nature is the raiment
Wherein the God of Nature robes His limbs;
To laud as Deity no counter-claimant;
To act and think and feel and be all true;
To vote with Love, in lawless legislature;
To cherish worlds, since worlds abide in you;—
We could perhaps call this Return to Nature.

But vastly most important of the whole
Wherein I have but named some single feature
Is that you recognize the subtle Soul
That animates and guides each living creature.
It matters little what you call the Thing—
Volition, Instinct, Conscience, Judgment, Longing,
It matters much how earnestly you cling
To those desires which with the Thing come thronging.
For this may sum the argument entire;—
The animals obey their Souls’ monition.
Escaping Its divinely righteous ire
That blights so much of human-hoped fruition.
No method, system, school, or cult, or creed
Need hamper you with fetish nomenclature;
To be yourself,—and let your godhood lead—
Herein, I wean, is true Return to Nature.

Environment

From out the blackest, grossest earth
The fairest flower may flourish.
Her seed evolved her own pure birth—
The clods but scantily nourish.

Within a sin-soiled world, I stood
Uncertain of my sweetness
Till, as a flower, I drew the good
From even sin’s completeness.

The Marriage of God and Nature

When relatives meddlesome come interfering
 'Twixt husband and wife there is apt to be strife;
Till ugly Divorce in its envy appearing
 Has torn them apart for the rest of their life.
When husband and wife are alone with each other,
 A thousand times closer entwines the soft bond
That makes the two one, with no room for another—
 The bond of Desire unites them more fond.

A billion years since, Father God went a-wooing;
 'Twas ages before this race human was born.
He wooed Mother Nature—nor wearied pursuing
 Until She said "Yes" on their bright wedding morn.
The child that first blessed them we know as Creation
 And from her matured, all we mortals have sprung;
And of her immortal in manifestation
 Of her immemorial poets have sung.

Now God has a friend that is surnamed Religion
 Who strives to tear God from dear Nature apart;
And threatens damnation with penalties Stygian
 In order to terrify God's human heart.
Then sweet Mother Nature knows some one called Science
 Who alienates Her from endearments of God,
And begs Her to place a more certain reliance
 Upon the grim skeletons dug from the sod.

And so God and Nature though longing to weld them
 In tenderest union; while heart with heart throbs;
Are sundered—so long have outsiders withheld them
 And robbed them of rapture; while heart from heart sobs.
Their daughter Creation is anxiously weeping
 That Nature and God have been rent into twain.
While we with our sympathies stunted and sleeping,
 Seek churches and books. But our quest is in vain.

O blinded Humanity, can a babe issue
 From womb of its mother or loins of its sire
Save only the bone and the blood and the tissue
 Be formed by uniting the parents' desire?
So call not God impotent,—Mind analytic,
 The while you hold Nature from God's dear embrace;
If Nature be sterile,—Oh Spiritist critic,
 You need but give God His original place.

Her Answer

I sent my Love a spray of bloom
 And begged her wear just one
To seal my happiness, or doom
 With a rose in her hair—or none.

I sped that night to the festal hall
 To watch for the maiden fair;
Then over my heart there fell a pall—
 Her tresses were coldly bare.

But while I looked there flamed afire
 The token I fain would seek;
For the rose that answered my heart's desire
 Had blossomed in her cheek.

Virgin Gold

Deep in the heart of the mountain there lay
Modestly, shyly in hiding
Nuggets of gold—virgin gold. Till one day
Miners disturbed their abiding.

All the bright nuggets forthwith they displaced,
Melted them up in a mixture;
Copper and nickel in coin that they chased—
Bases to give the gold fixture.

One bit they saved as a pure souvenir,
Put it where hands could not tarnish;
Mounted in setting whose charms would endear
With an appropriate garnish.

Moulded in money 'twould pass as mere coin
Coarsened through process of minting;
Gold in virginity never may join
Throngs harshly clutching and stinting.

Souls that the world with the wear of its care
Worries away prematurely—
There are the spirits most spotlessly fair,
Wrought the most finely and purely.

You, with your practical base of alloy,
Coin of a race roughly fingered,
Circulate still with the clink of your cloy.
Calloused, your spirit has lingered.

But if your brother lose heart and pass out,
Sensitive soul that soars higher,
Torture him not with derision or doubt—
Past is his crucible fire.

The Pursuit of Pleasure

Through the green meadows I wandered one day
Wandered away
Child—in my play,
Seeking the gold of the rainbow so gay;
Seeking but finding it fleeting.

Out from the flowers a fairy arose—
Every child knows
Where a child goes
When it needs Fairyland's balm for its woes—
There came we two to be meeting.

Softly I whispered and asked her her name.
"So you just came?
Wide is my fame,
Pleasure they call me—and rapture my aim.
Would you love life? Only follow."

Gleefully grasping the hand of my guide
Proud at her side
Proud in my stride
Gladly I followed. But soon I espied
Meadow depressed into hollow.

Into the valley of misty Despair,
Tottering where
Lust laid its lair
Pleasure allured me—made my soul bear
Tortures devised of the devil.

Pleasure deserted me. Pleasure cared not
How black the spot
Hellishly hot
Where my heart sank, with a moan that its lot
Lay where this Pleasure wrought revel.

Hopless I floundered and writhed and cried out;—
Groan and yet shout;
"Hedge me about
Doom me and damn me! But leave me, O Doubt,
Save me or slay me—one quickly."

Shrieking in torture my prayer to be saved
While still I raved
Gently there waved
Down from the heights the salvation I craved—
Cards woven strongly and thickly.

Some hidden hand held the life-saving line,
Paying it fine.
Strength newly mine,
Up till I drank once again Life's sweet wine
Climbed I with grasp sure and steady.

Ah, but the vision that met my glad eyes
Held a surprise
Reason denies;
How many facts that our reason defies
Seem to astound us made ready.

For on the summit stood Pleasure, arrayed
Not for the shade—
Lest the tints fade;
Splendor celestial about her displayed
Made me exclaim in wide wonder.

“Truly I led you,” she said with a kiss,
“Led you amiss,
You who sought bliss
All the while led you that you might seek this
Summit where mortal hopes sunder.

Deep in the gloom and the dead of the night
Robbed of my sight,
Crazed by my fright,
Cried I aloft for a glimmer of light,
Then and then only ascended.

When men would follow, they needs must face Hell;
Ah, I know well
Hell's human spell—
But if you climb to the heights where I dwell,
Heaven and I, lo, are blended.”

Mothering Souls

A virgin mother suffers more than man
Can ever comprehend. His mental span
Is limited to cold experience—
To sense a soul his brain is far too dense.
And yet to man the very synonym
For agony is that which seems to him
An unexplainable and mystic thing;
To even his dull eyes her sorrows bring
The tears of sympathy beyond control
That steal unbid from out his inmost soul.

The mother weighed in travail does but jest
Beside the enciente Soul within whose breast
Lies hope of unborn babe begot from God.
Since men so little know where God has trod,
More often they confound His greatest act
With Satan's power, by all their creeds attacked.
No earthly laws will ever legalize
To earthless Soul a spouse beyond the skies.
If they consort above the pale of sex
A child, or man, or patriarch, who recks
Of naught but that the Spirit broods above
May bear on earth a god conceived of Love.
Nor time nor place nor circumstance prevents
The union of the Soul with Spirit; whence
A second Christ in flesh or print or stone
Shall burst Immaculate, whom God must own.
The Spirit—whether He or She or It
Forever woos the Soul. Endearments fit
Along the sea of ether, on whose waves
Must navigate the human ere he braves
And dominates at last the Boundless All.
A million souls detect the whisper fall
Wherein the Limitless conceals Its voice.
Though every one if left to honest choice
Would mate with Spirit only, still the fear
Of men and laws and customs must appear—
An interloper snatching heart from heart,
To keep our dear divinities apart.
As lovers innocent of any wrong
May twine their raptured forms, since both belong
To one another and to Love, just so
When sympathy and impulse freely flow
The Spirit and the Soul commune as one;

And if they have not sadly learned to shun
The soft caress of those who thrill akin,
A babe is born. 'Tis God's—though men see sin.

O, Soul, if such you be, whose longings yearn
To mother all the Universe, then learn
That in your Spirit Lover lies the strength
To bear and buoy and cheer you any length
Whereto your travail labors. God perceives
Those law-abiding fools whose speech relieves
Themselves of undue pressure on the brain.
But God will not permit their curse to stain
The nascent Christ that struggles while you groan
And suffer in the night-time all alone.
So bear you hard upon the Spirit's arm,
Embraced thereby you nestle free from harm.
If ever tears would blur your downcast eye
Look on and up. And soon the Great Most High
Shall smile upon you, Mother Soul, to crown
Your pangs through wondrous Child of world-renown.

As A Flower

Does the flower question whence it came?
No more do I.
Fragrance pours profuse to waft it fame
That cannot die.

Years may pass—and still the perfume clings
To withered rose.
Eons flit—and still my spirit sings
Though flesh repose.

Two Views of Death

A sloughing of a shrunken shell;
A blasting of the hopes that dwell
 Within the human breast;
A rending of these mortal ties
By some fierce God beyond the skies,
 Whose ire is thus confessed;
A memory that brands red-hot
Our lives recorded blot by blot;
 An ashen-charred regret;
A throttling clutch upon the throat;
A band of leering fiends that gloat
 Their molten snares to set;
A sigh—a moan—a gasp—a groan;
A writhing anguish all alone
 With none to soothe the pain;
A blinding flood of bitter tears
To bury all that Life endears
 Beneath their torrents vain.
A gaunt-eyed throng of weeping friends
Who shriek as Fate's keen stroke descends
 And strive to stay the blow;
A stillness as of endless sleep;
A horde of famished worms that creep
 To wreak their crunching woe;
A torment far too deep for speech
In yawning Hell's relentless breach—
 Since thus the Preacher saith;
A damning of a spirit lost
On shoreless seas of brimstone tossed;—
 And *this to men is Death.*

A doffing of an outgrown robe
That clothed the Soul whose earth-abode
 Must house it for a time;
A childlike slumber, painless, sweet,
While just before rare visions greet
 And voice high Heaven's chime;
A world 'tis best to do without
And leave it to its dread and doubt—
 Its merely mortal mind;
A mob of foolish persons bent
On trickling tears of discontent
 Till all their views are blind;

A blasphemous black mourning rite
While through a superhuman light
 Flits he for whom they mourn;
A ceremony thick with shrouds
While he is smiling through the clouds
 Of whom they think them shorn;
Long prayers of penance for the dead;
And tears upon his grave, long shed—
 The dead who lives, now first;—
As wise to grieve for butterfly
Which as a grub must seem to die
 Before its beauty burst;—
A spirit crushed by mortal men,
Whose nobleness surpassed their ken
 Expanded full at last;
A lien on all Eternity;
Horizon-hope whence one may see
 The Time-disfigured Past;
A Soul unthralled and left to choose
What next integument to use
 To compass swifter growth;
A vast domain as free as air,
Unflecked by fear or grief or care
 With minions never loath;
An entrance into fuller Life
Where Love for hate and Peace for strife
 Yields Happiness unmixed;
Progression based on Heaven's hints
With power to conquer Cosmos, since
 No destiny is fixed;
A goal at which the sunrise quails,
A couch by which the sunset pales,
 A splendor unforetold;
Communion with those spirits who
Attuned on earth their ear to you
 The Self of you to hold;
A brotherhood of stars and suns
Whose love supports the weaker ones
 Until the least grow great;
A kingship with the Lord of All—
Of wingéd host and worms that crawl;
 Full mastery of Fate;

The Heaven promised every race
Upon this earth's full-featured face
 Condensed in one great joy;
But all the crudities cut off
Whereat men had a right to scoff—
 A Heaven without alloy;
A power quelling ocean's storm
And yet as light as rose's form
 And pure as lily's breath;
Solution in a blossomed Soul
For problems human buds enroll;—
 And *this to God is Death.*

A Bit of Crepe

A bit of crepe upon the door
 And nothing more;
But oh the woe that lurks behind!
To stab the heart and shroud the mind,
Attacking hosts of humankind
 Whose tears outpour.

A bit of hope within the heart;
 Then woes depart,
The clouds that frowned across the sky
Have rolled away. And from on high
The heart of Heaven draweth night
 Whence sunbeams dart.

A bit of love to light the soul;
 Let shadows roll
As dense as forest wraithed in shade.
Lo! even ere the shadow fade
Some sunrise glory is displayed
 To clear the Whole.

Sunset on the River

In a lovely land of hills
Flows a stream whose life instils
From its surging hillside rills

Rapture—and with reason.

For while night is settling low
O'er the waters' mirrored flow,
Sunset splendors come and go

In the autumn season.

Clear in placid pools there lie
Blendings rich of earth and sky;
Earth on shore and sun on high

Meet in mystic mingling.

Radiant hues of autumn leaf
Nature's ripened golden sheaf
Stretched in wondrous, rare relief,

Thrill our senses tingling.

Sunshine glints athwart the shade;
Heaven's beauties are displayed
Ere the suns of winter fade

And the sad pines shiver.

Vista vivid lends the stream
Backward glow with onward gleam,
Calm supernal, hope supreme—

Sunset on the River.

When the sun descends at last
On my Soul's unruffled past,
May the prospect be as vast,
Shedding equal glory.

May I rest as calm and clear;
Thus reflect when night draws near
Foregleams from a higher sphere
O'er my life's pure story.

Love is God

A woman had taken a loaf from another,
Not begging but stealing.
The woman was penniless. She was a mother;
About her were kneeling
And starving and crying for one crust of bread
Her gaunt, pinchéd children that must have lain dead
But for this bare morsel. Since Law she defied
Her sentence was lawful. Yet still her soul cried;—
“I loved them so dearly!
The need of them nearly
Put me in the sod.
And is not Love God?”

A virgin no longer a virgin lay weeping
And throbbing and twinging.
The man who had wooed her sweet body slunk creeping
And halting and cringing.
The world cried “Dishonored,” condemning them both.
Her father impanelling jurists on oath
Declared it a crime for two lovers to love.
Then Truth—my heart heard her—proclaimed from above;—
“Blasphemers, cease blaming
These lovers! enshaming
Them scourged of Law’s rod.
Love truly is God.”

A soul so illumined it broke every fetter
Whose cruelly binding
Enshacklement crushed it; saw farther and better
Relieved of creed’s blinding.
Expanding beyond the sectarian thrall,
Its personal God was the Good in us all.
But churchmen were shocked at this atheist’s views,
Expelled him from worship their Man-God might lose.
“Ye churchlings debasing;
In vain your effacing
Of heights I have trod.
I—loving, *am* God.”

God in Sin

A huge unsightly mass of blackness loomed
 Athwart the sky,
So frowning that the children scarce presumed
 To pass it by.
Through many weary months it grew and grew
 Though none saw how.
The shroud upon its surface hid its view,
 Hid then—not now;
For finally the work, declared complete
 Was all unveiled.
Before the form mens' eyes were bid to greet
 Their dreams had paled;—
A golden statute, smiling, wooing, stood
 Imbued with grace
Revealing, when it shed its dismal hood,
 A human face.
The children clapped their hands. They gathered near,
 Nor felt afraid—
Since features like their own their foolish fear
 Had quite allayed.

The veil called Sin encloses roundabout
 This human kind.
Beholding but the pall cast on without,
 Our childish mind
Would shudder at the shroud. And flee the sight
 That mortal men
Despoil of good. But when exposed to light
 The likeness then
Of God Himself shall burst upon our eyes.
 To God akin
Some souls already—prematurely wise,
 See God in Sin.

Poets Piteous

You call me a poet. Sometimes a faint gleam
Of truth you discern through the rhyme you esteem.
But ah you know not, nor ever can dream

What anguish I suffer.
My soul sobs asunder;
So deep pinioned under
Man's crass gilded plunder,
I seem but a buffer

Between a world struggling and shackles supreme.

A bit of embellishment verbally wrought
From out my heart's texture, with pangs dearly bought,
You judge by its rhythm. The longings that sought

Therein some expression
You pass all unwitting.
Mere phantoms they fitting
Beyond your brows knitting
But mark your confession

That you cannot *feel* —as a free spirit ought.

None knows but a poet, an artist, a bard,
The sorrows that doom the race, griping it hard.
The wounds fresh and bleeding, the wounds old and scarred,

They cut the flesh tender
Of humans to teach them
Why woes must impeach them
And ruin still reach them
Their reason to render,

Till men learn the causes of grief to regard.
The waif in the gutter,—the king on his throne,
The populace herding,—the hermit alone,
The patriarch dying,—the babe yet ungrown,

They all have their sorrow.
But still they all share it
With him who will bear it
Unflinching, and wear it
A shroud he must borrow—

Vicarious sufferer—born to atone.

The tiniest life in the world that feels pain
Impresses my heart, nor impresses in vain.
At times with the woes of the world sent insane

I rack me with sobbing.
Sad sympathies crowding,
Unkindnesses clouding,
Forebodings enshrouding,
Possess my brain throbbing
And all of its energies sap till they drain.

Ah, envy me not the ephemeral fame
Attaching its wreath to a poet's brief name.
If you were to suffer in measure the same
Lo, fame would not flourish.
No man Messianic
But felt some Titanic
Heart-throe. Some oceanic
Grief-tide; whose depths nourish
The frail plant of poesy, whence these blooms came.

Stream and Source

With laughing swirl and playful whirl
And cataract resounding
The storied Rhine delights to shine.
Along its banks abounding
Sweet verdure springs whose fragrance flings
Far up and down the valley;
Till weary men are tempted then
Within its realm to dally.
The River Song just flows along
As if 'twere born to babble
Its brimming glee to you and me
While by its brink we dabble.
Yet first it flows whence no one knows
Amid the Alpine mountains;
A thousand brooks from lofty nooks
Have swelled its ceaseless fountains.
* * * * *
That songful Soul whose deeds may roll
For human fructifying
Has hid alone on heights unknown
Above all mortal spying.

The Flower of Woman's Love

In a hothouse all protected
Where surroundings were directed
By the tender, wise attention of a floriculturist;
Once a violet was growing
Through his thoughtful care bestowing
Such a gracious, sweet perfume upon the atmosphere she kissed.

If there wandered by a worry,
All the garden in a flurry
Just pulled to its glass enclosure, shutting interlopers out.
Not a boisterous wind could harry
Or a chilly hailstone tarry
Where a home so providential reared its fortress roundabout.

But the gardener once while making
Extra haste, his care forsaking
Left a cruel piece of timber lying on the violet.
And the shadow crushed the flower
Closer cringing hour by hour
Till her heart lay cold and dying when the evening sun had set.

In a woodland wild and lonely
Where the forest monarchs only
Were preserving haughty vigilance upon the rugged slope,
There matured somewhat tardy
Struggling with her neighbors hardy
Still another little violet. But she must bravely grope

Through a tangled mass forbidding,
Where the weeds would fain be ridding
Their uncouth and lawless conclaves from a presence chiding fair.
So her angry neighbors bristled
While the winds more ruthless whistled
While the chilly blasts of Boreas thus flung their spiteful share

Toward the flower's persecution.
Every hour's revolution
Seemed to fasten on her being still another cruel clutch.
But the wondrous flower flourished,
For a *loving sunbeam* nourished
And empowered her to blossom by his sympathetic touch.

There exists a budding fragrance
In a spot where Nature's vagrance
May not penetrate to rob it of its tender virgin heart.

In the bosom of a maiden
By her mother-breasts o'erladen
There abides a flower nascent—Woman's Love—that hides apart.

You may place here where surrounding
Tempest shocks are fierce resounding
And the barren earth exhales a blighting poverty of growth;
Or the struggle with her neighbors
For the fruits of all her labors
Would compel a stronger creature to forsake the battle, loath.

Let the cruel blasts of sorrow
Cloud the day and shroud the morrow;
Let the Universe unite to crush the fragile flower's life;
If you smile upon her—tender
That is all she needs to lend her
Such a superhuman sweetness as illumines a loving wife.

A Rainbow Smile

High in his chariot gleaming like gold
Pompously proud and commanding
Glories the Sun. But we cannot behold
Splendors past our understanding.

Gently unveiling her sweet laughing face
Rare as a shy four-leaf clover,
Glances the Rainbow. We haste to the place
Wait till her last smile is over.

Every-day cheer on the faces of men
Lightens our way; still less sweetly
As when the tears fall in torrents—and then
Smiles come to banish completely.

Measure Me an Hour

“Measure me an hour,”

I bade a tortoise sprawling
Sluggish, churlish, sour,
Where Earth's great tears are falling.
Not the barest nod
Vouchsafed the clumsy creature;
Clammy as a clod
Lay listless every feature.
When the hour was past,
I found the logy turtle
Senseless—sleeping fast.
A thousand storms might hurtle;
Avalanches pour;
The elements commingle;
Cataclysms roar;
And through all not a single
Sound disturbs the brute,
Inert, inane, inutile;
Time's intense pursuit
Falls short, forever futile.

“Measure me an hour,”

I bade an ant whose eager
Consciousness of power
Would any sloth beleaguer.
Straining every limb—
Abristle with ambition—
Cheery still, the glim
Of joy illumines her mission.
Scarce the tenth had sped
Of this the hour expected
When I saw ahead
An army close collected;
Ants of every size
And strength and stride and muscle;
Bearing each a prize
For which the fiercest tussle
Made the creatures groan—
The weight was so oppressive.
Proudly led alone
My ant the host aggressive.

Chronometric name

By human computation
Fixed both hours the same.

And yet complete cessation
Marked the course of one—
If acts be worth computing;
While its span was run
A life was but imbruting.
Through the second space
An army was advancing
Swift from place to place,
Its revenues enhancing.

Figures on a clock
Are fallacies deceiving
With their clanging shock
That toll the minutes leaving.
Time is framed within
The heart whose rare attaining
Makes a mortal win
In spite of dial's feigning.

Renunciation

The maid was wondrous fair in face and limb.
And as he looked, her beauty thrilling him
Sent passion surging like a tidal wave
Throughout his frame—a wave he dared not brave.
He looked again. He gasped. He hid his eyes.
He pursed his pious lips—ah, he was wise—
Renounced the carnal pulse. Renounce he must—
Saint Anthony—*himself he could not trust.*

* * * * *

A sinner passed, his soul so sensitive
That every form of beauty seemed to give
A pang of longing, that he might translate
The passion of the souls that must create.
He too discerned the maid. But stooping down
He gently touched her cheek—her virtue's crown—
Then whispered, "Dear, I love you far too well
To press you close, and spoil your virgin's spell."

Love and the Lark

A lark once flitted beside my door
And I bade the lark come in;
But though I beckoned her o'er and o'er
She was none of my kind or kin.

So I ceased my importuning quite
And I looked the other way;
When she sought my arm—this warbling wight—
And settled as if to stay.

The silver song from her crested throat
Entranced my listening ear,
While sped its melody far remote
To burst on a distant sphere.

Desirous then of possessing her
I touched her tender wing.
With a little flutter and frightened stir
The birdling ceased to sing;

Her voice with terror first grew hoarse,
Then mute with fear and dread.
Till back she flew on her airy course—
Forever my longings fled.

Oh Love is a lark with the sweetest song
That ever a mortal heard;
Yet you cannot summon her till she long
To sing as a soaring bird.

And when she nestles your human heart
'Twere best *to notice not*,
But just enjoy; while her songs impart
Their thrill. Lest she leave the spot.

Through Psychic to Mystic

My brain is another's
Now foe's and now brother's
But never my own for a set space of time;
For through it are rushing
And clashing and crushing
The thoughts of the world that make me but a mime.

The shadows that haunt me,
The spectres that taunt me,
The demons that leer with a lurid red eye,
The fetters that thrall me,
The fears that appall me;
Belong to the train of some spirit swept by.

He leaves them behind him—
These objects that bind him,
And flees while he frees his chilled flesh from their touch.
But fleeing he leaves them
For one who receives them
Lethargic—though wild to escape from their clutch.

What maddening devils
Cavort in their revels
Upon by brain feverish—bursting—on fire;
My maudlin mind mooning
And drooning and swooning
Goes out as the gust of a futile desire.

The graves of creation
Entombing damnation
Have lifted their lids till their stench turns me sick.
With foulness streaking
Their vapors rise reeking
Of vices and villainies noisomely thick.

On yon remote border
Of civilized order
A savage is roasting his prey at the stake;
His victim is moaning
And writhing and groaning
In all his mad torture must I too partake.

Beside me some neighbor
Connives to shirk labor
And drudges and drones with a hate in his heart;

His hate disconcerts me
My courage deserts me
His thought has impaled me—a venom-tipped dart.

Above the thronged city
I hover in pity
In pity that men like wild cattle should herd.
No less is my sorrow
Lone countrymen borrow
To see their souls stunted—too dead to be stirred.

Sad spirits command me—
Shall men understand me?
Ah, never till men may transcend their mere brain.
I live and die lonely.
But if through me only
One truth be revealed—I am racked not in vain.

O, Soul! cease repining.
The sun is still shining
And Heaven—not Man—thrills response to your cry.
Though lowlands be dreary,
Love's summit is cheery;
Leave spirits earth-shackled. Soar on to the sky.

For shame to be blaming
Thought-wanderers, claiming
That you deserve pity since helpless—their prey
Why, even the Devil
A devil's own level
Must seek. If above it, fear not—face the Day.

Your senses are finer
With God their Designer
That you may approach and appreciate Him.
For ears must hear keenly,
And vision see cleanly,
And heart respond wholly, while thrills frame and limb.

Sad thoughts must forsake you
When Love shall once make you
Receptive to messages higher than Thought.
For highest is *Feeling*;
And Love's true revealing
Thence dawns to the fullest degree you have sought.

The Mind has its valley
Where languid souls dally
And mourn for a bourne that still beckons beyond.
Above this vale's shadow
Invites Eldorado!
Emerge into space—and of earth be less fond.

Throughout countless ages
The spirits of sages
Have waited to minister swift to your need.
Call them—not the ghastly
Grim shades that throng vastly
To block your strait path. With the prophets proceed.

Beneath their weird croaking
All spectres are cloaking
A fear quite reciprocal, summing your own.
Be bold and defy them;
Their mask will belie them,
And they shall flee fearful. And you reign alone.

These psychic surroundings
Are like to the soundings
Men take to determine the tint of the sea.
Though shallows be sullied
By surface streams gullied
The fathomless deep is as clear as can be.

Love's ether, grown boundless
And senseless and soundless
Shall shelter no longer these breeders of ruth.
Do mortals defame you?
Yourself shall proclaim you
Possessed not of demons—illumined of Truth.

At last your own master
Above earth's disaster,
Above personalities, living or dead,
Behold the Eternal
With splendor supernal
Shall brighten the path where your footsteps have bled.

Aborted

The patient ass performs his irksome labor day by day
Apparently content to drudge his tedious life away.
But if the ass were made to sing—though singing be by far
The easier, the brute could not conclude a single bar.

The lark that flits among the trees was born to ceaseless song;
Her melodies the sweetest, dearest memories prolong.
But if the bird were harnessed, thus constrained to drag her load,
Her silent struggles her eternal stillness would forebode.

In Man there consummate the orders designated brute
Whose salient traits through Man's innate Divinity transmute
Their heavy, shaggy, wild, uncouthly unattractive mould.
To trace, with dainty beauty, forms an angel might enfold.
In every man some animal predominates. Its voice
Should swell above the minor tones, proclaiming loud its choice
Among the multitudinous vocations men have filled—
With less success the readier its pleadings they have stilled.
And yet where dwell the humans, undiscovered to themselves,
The devils do the work of gods, and fairies that of elves.
The sweetest songsters of the race are burdened as the ass;
Those fragrant souls whose mission is to soothe you as you pass
Are crushed and withered hopelessly beneath the sultry sun,
That glares relentless on the slave whose task is never done.
Yet menials born to labor loll about in softest silk
Though chafed distraught within the gauze that scarce befits their
ilk.

And so of all God's creatures, Man alone must grope confused
Until he learns to sense his powers fatally misused.
Perhaps in distant ages we shall seek in Nature's ways
And glean the education whose objective truly pays.

Rejoice—if you have found your message whose expression gives
A Messianic motive to the meanest thing that lives.
But—when you judge the flutterings of soul that may have erred,
Remember then the tortures of a bound and baffled bird.

How the Dimple Grew

A maiden once was weeping
As maidens will you know—
For in their mystic keeping
Hold tears both weal and woe—

When suddenly came stealing
From no one knew just where,
Its modesty concealing,
A smile; so debonair

That meeting tear first falling
Athwart the maiden's face
Its very touch enthralling
Enclosed in soft embrace

The drop of sorrow, grieving
No longer o'er hopes dead.
And lo, it vanished, leaving
A dimple in its stead.

If on your cheek bright beaming
Whenever smile meets tear;
A dimple be not gleaming—
It's in your heart, My Dear.

The Illegitimate Child

Isolated, ostracized, barred from men's commingling;
Hated, feared, shunned, despised; cut with curses tingling
From the forkéd tongues of those mouthing in their blindness
Angry calumnies and woes void of human kindness;
Branded with a living shame; seared from birth by sorrow;
Plundered even of the name none may buy or borrow;
There it stands and shivers, shorn clean of all but being
Fugitive to Death's bleak bourne; doomed by man's decreeing.
 Vagabond and outcast is the child illicit;
 Stone it—if you dare; hoot it, hound it, hiss it.

Petted, fondled, crowned, adored, minions at his bidding
Every obstacle untoward frantically ridding
From the path of son and heir born in wedlock's cover,
Life for him is passing fair, "angels" o'er him hover,
And the future opens wide gates of gilded glory;
For his mother was a bride. And the mouldy, hoary
Fiat binding loveless twain twined about the baby
Laws respectable and sane. If perchance they may be.
 Autocrat and princeling is the heir made legal;
 Bow the knee and render homage due the regal.

Winds of Heaven, pregnant oft with the seeds of flowers,
Dare you fructify aloft fields enciente with bowers?
Birds, free nesting where you will, mating whomsoever
Instinct authorizes, still old espousals never,
Shall you not be stricken dead, chancery defying
Save you make your marriage bed lawfully allying?
Holy Ghost, in Mary's womb, did some priest permit you?
Church's rite—not Virgin's bloom, for the Christ-child fit you?
 Parentage illegal—may lacking Law defame us;
 Liason illicit does lacking Love enshame us.

Why the Shell Shatters

The seed within the ground though quite intact
Lies dead

Until its soaring Soul with longing racked
Has shed

The polished crust that cased the Soul at first.
Some break

Upon the even surface must have burst,
To wake

The sleeping germ to all the natal need
That Life

Instils within a growing thing. Indeed
The strife

“Twixt Soul and shell—when Souls do most advance,
Cuts deep.

It matters not. For Destiny—not Chance
Shall heap

Upon itself the circumstances which
It wrests

That they emerge whose deep resources rich
God tests.

What man has called Misfortune bruises oft
The shell

Wherein his Soul that stretches far aloft
May dwell

In infancy. Some circumstance abrades;
Then he

Bemoans the rended tomb whose figment shades
Till free

His stifled Soul. O foolish mortal mind!
To grieve

When shackles shatter and the things that bind
Relieve

Their pressure with a sudden snap. For you—
Your Soul—

Perceived that if externals should accrue,
The whole

Of God would suffer—buried in the clay.
And so

You flung your man-affections clean away—
To grow.

A Reversed Theology

They picture Hell a soundless pit
Whose seething vengeance glows
Where deep sequestered horrors flit
Beneath a cold world's woes.

While Heaven floats ethereal
Enwrapped in holy haze
Whose canopy empyreal
Surpasses mortal gaze.

There is no Heaven, neither Hell
Save in the eye alone
That visions deep, below the spell
Of seeming star or stone.

If forkéd lightnings play above,
And storms revengeful rage
Propelled by Hate and not by Love—
Too fiendish to assuage;

If clouds be dissipated clods
And Matter all there be;
The Power some blind Fate's—not God's
So far as man can see;

If solar spheres be framed and wrecked
As churly chance may choose;
If comets, mad, career unchecked
Their freedom to abuse;

If horrid harpies brood on high
To vex a helpless man;—
Then Hell all lurid lies awry
Amid the heavens' span.

If limpid waters flow along
A grassy sun-lit shore,
To murmur low their lapping song
Of welcome to the roar

Of Ocean's anthem swelling loud
Surcharged with Primal Power
And, conscious of It, justly proud
To voice It, hour by hour;

If stones proclaim a sermon heard
By inner senses true;
If waving meadows lisp their word
Of joyousness to you;

If every tiny bursting bloom
But throws its petals wide
To compass more expanding room
To shed the Love inside;

If all the worms and weeds that grow
As fellow-gods you greet;—
Then Heaven stoops and lingers low
Beneath your very feet.

Love and Duty

Love and Duty made a tryst.
Duty came but Love he missed;
Looked around, yet found her not
Anywhere about the spot.
Frowned and grumbled, stormed and raved,
All her path with curses paved;
Thus did Duty—surly he
Since he loved not Love, you see.

Love came late. And with her brought
That whence Duty's grace she sought.
"Duty dear, I saw a bird
Flutter, wounded. Feebly stirred
This her body racked with pain.
'Help!' she cried. Nor cried in vain.
So I stopped to bind her wing.
See! The bird begins to sing."

"Take your whole bird-business back,"
Snapped stern Duty. "You must lack
Common sense and honor too.
Kept me waiting overdue
While you patched your piping ward.
Leave—henceforth to slink abhorred."
Love and Duty parted then.
Nor have they been friends again.

Bohemia Beckons

Men compose songs to their place of nativity.
Humans seem mostly addicted to odes
Bearing the stamp of an inborn proclivity
Thus to exalt their primeval abodes.
Ever intent on a shelter locational,
Hymning their home in a congregant host,
Wholly forget they that love inspirational
Functions unfettered the freest and most.
Songs patriotic that win popularity
Lauding sequestered some single small place
Swiftly disintegrate that solidarity
Said to inhere in the whole human race.
Love men cannot when the heart is attaching it
Solely and blindly to circumscribed spot;
For when Fate seizes the home, roughly snatching it,
Love evanesces. And such love loves not.

Am I then homeless and friendless and motherless?
Have I no heath where my spirit may cling?
Orphan not only, but sisterless, brotherless,
Envious thus, other homes hate to sing?
Homeless I am, yet acknowledge not friendlessness;—
Friends dear to me loose forever home ties;
Neither such freedom, affection or endlessness
Offers a home where home selfishness lies.
Freeing my spirit, with nothing to fetter it
Shaking the shackles of family pride,
Seeking the Love Universal to better it,
Out from my home henceforth homeless I stride.
Child of the Universe, let me be sundering
All the relationships binding a man,
Since from my Soul proclamation is thundering;—
“Dwell in Bohemia! Dwell there who can.”

Negligent, tolerant, careless Bohemia,
Home of the spirit and not of the flesh,
None of the listlessness there—the anaemia
Lining the folds of the home's narrow mesh.
None of the duty, the duty traditional
Husbands and wives are constrained to obey
Blights the affections ere Love grow fruitonal;
Blights them with custom, with honor, with pay.
Hours and minutes that clang their recessional
Ever receding with us looking back,

Clanging the knell of a future progressional,
Keeping the mind on a sun-dial's rack;
Human opinions that mob men unreasoning—
Thoughts of externals, chill shudders at fate—
Undulant, sinuous, plotting their treasoning
Burrowing under the mortal mind's gate;

Creeds, superstitions, all racial rule rigorous;
Loyalty, pride, bonds of caste and of sex;
Usages taut, with a stretch over-vigorous
Drawn o'er a race that appearance most checks;
Claims of outsiders that probe superficially
Into a life which the heart alone knows;
Penalties, prisons and threats flung judicially
At the poor soul that must sin as it grows;
Hedgings and harpings and houndings whose haltering
Puts a man's neck in the noose of the mind
Keeps his heart trembling and dreading and faltering
Lest the noose tighten and death round him wind;
All these encumbrances humanly harrowing
Whence a free spirit derives its brief care;
All the strait tendencies humanly narrowing;—
These in Bohemia fade into air.

Genius takes genesis when Freedom beckons it
Out from the rut and the rule of the throng;
Genius finds exodus when the world reckons it
Solely a singer because of its song.
Here in Bohemia, Genius full-flowering
Bursts into bloom as a bud in the spring—
Forth from the depths of it leaps the empowering
Message this soul was just sent here to bring.
Talents untouched by the termagants dragging them
Through education that draws nothing out
Here are expanded. And grow, with none flagging them
Greenish with envy or blackish with doubt.
"Be but yourself!" is the slogan awaking us
Softly and gently, but mightily too
Up to the eminence whence we betaking us
Face the sun fairly—and dare to be true.

Back in a country where shepherds were tethering
Closely and carefully flocks feeding near,
Lived once a Man who evaded the heathering,
Homing and haunting of spots that endear.
Though the few friends that He had were all pressing Him
Somewhere to settle—and best in their home,

Still He refused them. The Spirit kept blessing Him
Only so long as He lonely should roam.
Wife He knew not. And the children He favored most
All were begotten by some stranger sire;
For He knew well that a family savored most
Strongly of duty—and not of desire.
Speak I with reverence moved by sincerity
When I declare that the Christ lived as I;
Free to unfold with a facile celerity
In a Bohemia founded on High.

A Fledgeling Flutters

When a birdling nesting
Its powers testing
Attempts to fly, with a flutter wild;
The mother-bird hovers
And lovingly covers
The unformed wings of her restless child.

The little one knowing
It still is growing
Then trusts the mother and lies content.
Its wings maturing
Shall soon be assuring
The promise kept of delay well spent.

When I, grown restless,
Would fain be nestless
And toss my flightless wings about;
The God-Mother, wiser
Than child who defies Her,
Just presses me back ere I venture out.

I trust completely,
I sink back sweetly,
Await the wings that must slowly grow.
Till at last endowered
As She, full-powered,
I shall soar with the gods. Not trust—but know.

Finding the Focus

Let a little baby point a telescope
At the sun
Scanning with his feeble gaze the stellar slope
Bare eyes shun.

If perchance the focus fit his tiny sight
He may see;
But if not, the solar beam celestial bright
Blurred must be.

Then the peevish infant blames the sun that hides;
Dull of wit
Breaks the glass wherein his impotence abides,
Bit by bit.

You—a baby soul, direct your glass toward Truth.
Truth is blurred—
Ignorance, and trembling hold, and fitful youth,
These have erred.

When the hand of Knowledge sets the focus true
As it will,
Skilled to blend the Light peculiarly for you;
Patient still

Since you trust the staunch support that Faith supplies
Always best;
Then shall Truth reveal her splendors where your eyes
Peaceful rest.

The Place Auspicious

There exists in God's Creation
Some spot where a man may brood
And bend with a just elation
Success from his every mood.

Does he long to span the heavens
With achievements unsurpassed?
'Tis the mountain's breath that leavens
The hopes that attain at last.

Does he weary of his striving
And yearn for a place of rest
Remote from his mad contriving?
Then the ocean lulls the best.

Once God had a busy hour
And a time for tranquil joys;
So He clothed the hills with His Power,
But the sea with His peerless Poise.

A Surcharged Flood

A mountain gorge was dammed across by sticks
Which lads would fix
To hold the leaping cataract, whose flow
Restrained below
Accommodates their play. The bashful ooze
Its force must lose
When dabbled in and sailed with chips upon.
Asparkle shone
Their eyes short-sighted. Every rivulet
Whose moisture wet
Their eager touch, appeared as if they owned.
They them enthroned,
Proud masters of the sea. Exalted they
Their dam of clay
So lofty that they clean forget the surge
Whose rise must urge
Impetuous, resistless as the tide;—
And then deride
All artificial walls. Too late to flee
Amazed they see
A raging torrent sweeping down the slope.
It gulfs their hope
And them together buffeted and bruised.
Since they misused,
Despised, diminished stream and source, its path
Exhales its wrath.

My restless Soul a sea of power roars
And ceaseless pours
Its mighty volume hard against the dam
Whose fragile sham
Decaying barricade men dared to build.
At last, flood-filled
The barriers grown impotent shall snap.
I hope mayhap
Yon loiterers have seen Me surge sublime
In tardy time
To make their wild escape. But oh, if not
I can but blot
Their slight, obstructing forms to nothingness.
While I progress.

God Only

I wandered one day where the masters had hung
 The works of their prime,
And men in admiring multitudes sung
 Their genius sublime.
Unmoved by the technical torsions of Art
I stood in my loneliness, silent, apart.
Could daubs from a palette find place in my heart?
 Why, I have seen God!

I sat in my pew while the organ's grand peal
 Poured forth into song,
Whose echoes aroused an ephemeral zeal
 In hearts of the throng.
One note in a thousand gave me scare a thrill.
Can organ and organist's harmonies fill
This heart with their rapture? Though voices be still
 My heart yet hears God.

I scanned the great books of the sages, piled high
 On library shelves.
Inscribed by the learned, adept to espy
 All themes save themselves.
Their facts and their figures,—their logical claims,
Their quibbles and quarrels,—their titular names
Repelled me aghast at such lore as defames
 A mind that spans God.

I kissed a pure maiden with reverent touch—
 A lover's caress.
For I was a youth, and a maiden meant much
 I could but confess.
Then suddenly shot from the sky a great Light.
In letters of gold that shone clear through the night
This vision indelible burned my sad sight;—
 "Thou wooest? Woo God."

Proceed in your tiny attempts to portray
 The Infinite Soul.
Sing on with a voice like a Lorelei lay—
 Let melodies roll.
Though pleasures be thick as the sands by the sea
They pass unmolested the spirit of Me.
Prime heir to the raptures of souls that be free
 This soul knows its God.

“Abandoned”

The sun had left them to themselves. And as the stars came out
They nestled closer—lovers true. The daylight of their doubt
That but disclosed the wizened form of surface things of men
Had vanished since the darkness helped them sense their souls.

For when

Two lovers let themselves forget

The sterile standards men have set,

Then God enfolds them with a love no man has measured yet.

From every tender touch where'er her lover's hands had strayed
A thrill had quivered through her. All his soft caresses made
The maiden's inborn touch motherhood leap up in mighty throbs
Until her virgin passion's longing swayed her with its sobs.

And then the God of him and her,

Too pure to sin—too wise to err

Just mated as the birds, nor thought whose blame It might incur.

When they awoke, from out the dream of Love's forgetful bliss
A flower blossomed where the two had met—and left a kiss.
Though formed in wondrous beauty, still the little human bud
Was flung beneath the heel of men, and trampled in the mud.

“Abandoned woman,” cried the world,

As on the child its curses hurled

An odium that blasts that over which its scorn has curled.

Amid an equal solitude, to worlds both deaf and dumb
An artist clasped a spirit-form. He prayed, “Creator, come!”
“Oh Mother Inspiration, bear a child of brain and heart
Whose message to the souls of men shall be of God—apart.”

His prayer came true. Upon the child

Was heaped men's adulation wild;

This child reposed in marble—only flesh can be defiled.

Then God looked down. And God was wroth. And God said,

“Stay in Hell,

O evil-minded world. Nor ever hope in bliss to dwell
So long as you blaspheme the sacred stream of Love whose course
Winds in and out of Heaven, *with Abandonment its source.*

Abandoned must the lover be,

As thoughtlessly abandoned he

Who weds the Spirit. Genius, Love—and God must all be free.”

Where Dwells the Sunlit Soul

You may dream of your quaint old Swiss chalet
With its edelweiss adorning,
Where a tangent Sun prolongs the day
Through a lustrous, white-limned morning;

You may laud the castle that Briton bold
Has built with the wealth accruing
From his lieges robbed and chattels sold
For his ultimate undoing;

You may hymn sweet odes to the Fatherland
Deep loyalty professing—
And the tender touch of your Gretchen's hand
Keeps time, with its caressing;

You may choose your home beneath the flag
Of Freedom gaily waving,
While the masses in its shadow drag
To a close their sullen slaving;

You may bind your love to any spot
In earth or heavens lying;
And you cramp the Soul, that narrows not
To a planet doomed and dying.

For the North and South and East and West
Of the heart's congenial dwelling
Abide beyond the compass' test,
In a world whose music swelling

No human ear can ever sense
Nor human eye the gleaming
Of glorious visions, rising whence
The Real belies the Seeming.

For the hills of Hope are an Eastern slope
Whose sun is always smiling;
But the vale of Fear spans a darkness drear
Where the West its night is whiling;

And the chill of Hate blows a North-cold fate
That blights the soul unfolding;
While the breath of Love from realms above
Is the South wind's blessing holding.

You may house your body in Afric's plain
Or an Iceland hut's enclosure;
But the Sun of your Soul shall never wane
In its own South-East exposure.

Life's Husbandman

A husbandman of harvests, wise, minutely provident and skilled
Selects the fairest, choicest seed
To fructify his special need,
Commits it then to soil that yields the most and best for being
tilled.

But first he plows a furrow where before the barren earth had hid
Beneath her sterile surface deep
Her fruitful womb that lay asleep
Until aroused by seed whose touch her motherhood shall softly
bid.

To right or left the plowman glances not. He fixes straight ahead
His keenly unremitting gaze.
And, lest he stray in crooked ways,
He views some distant object with a near. Thus true his course
is led.

A husbandman of Life, within my brain I guard a thousand kinds
Of thoughts, that quickly germinate
And harvests like themselves create
When once they fall upon the fields of Cosmic or atomic minds.

I sift and sift and sift again the germ-potentials in my Thought
To choose and use the very best—
Forgot, let Time inter the rest;
And then I find the spot on earth for just this seed with promise
fraught.

I dig my tedious furrow, caring not what loiterers may say;
The parchéd earth may burn my feet;
The long, hard toil may seem ill mete
To satisfy a husbandman with aching limbs at close of day.

But still I persevere. For two bright points allure me on and on.
A great Ideal beckons me
Beyond the Real mortals see.
My harvest shall appear, when long enough the Sun of Truth
has shone.

The Unfinished Portrait

A crude and formless mass of color lies
Upon a canvas, while the artist rests.
Design is lacking. There is none so wise
As but to hazard what the daub suggests.
Grotesquely purposeless the spots appear
As if the painter, whelmed in sudden rage,
Had flung his implements with folly sheer
Where ruin greatest might his wrath assuage.
The palette too is utterly devoid
Of any slightest touch denoting Art.
Its surface everywhere is queerly cloyed
With tints prepared to blend, yet left apart.
Are blotches spattered here and there the sign
Of that peculiar temperamental gift
Whose tracings pencil concepts most divine?
We question thus, the mystery to sift
And ponder deeply, till the man returns
Whose recklessness where colors are involved
Apparently our condemnation earns.
But speedily the culprit is absolved;
For lo, a few swift strokes from magic brush
Descending here and there with defftest grace
Disclose a face illumed with beauty's blush
That seems to light the whole surrounding place.

The artist puts together tones and shades
From off a palette any man may find;
But previous to tint that blurs and fades—
He blends the form ideal in his mind.

If God the Master Artist now and then
Must rest and leave a little while the Plan
Whereat He labors long, perfecting men.
Shall humans with their lesser judgment scan
The portrait still unfinished—then despise
Both it and Him who paints it? Let us wait;
Believing not our grossly holden eyes,
Until the final stroke descend from Fate.

For though my beauty lie potential yet
Promiscuous upon a palette's shelf,
The Infinite enjoins me not to fret—
He paints the while an Image of Himself!

Blind Deity Prays

I prayed for Fame and a laurel wreath,
A budding diadem beneath,
A magic wand in a fairy sheath;
 To ease my lot.

I asked that purbind word should see
What merit might abide in me;
But God said, "Fame is not for thee."
 So Fame came not.

I prayed for Power and a mighty hand
To sway whole worlds at my command
And marshal many an eager band
 Success to seek;
But God said, "Prayers do but confuse
Save thou art competent to use
The boons thy foolish heart would choose."
 I still lay weak.

I prayed for Wealth and a countless hoard
To buy me circumstances toward
From vast accumulations stored
 To back my bond;
But God said, "Tempt not thus thy fate.
Until thou hast some purpose great
Mere riches scant could compensate."
 Wealth gleamed beyond.

I prayed for Beauty—that sweet grace
Which hallows every winsome face
And makes, where'er its homing-place,
 Glad smiles abound;
But God said, "Thoughtless thou hast sought
What never has been loaned or bought.
True Beauty from the Soul is wrought."
 My mirror frowned.

Disheartened then I ceased from prayer
To find my one and constant care
A quest for Love. Searched everywhere—
 Both cloud and clod.
And then a wondrous joy possessed
My being. For at my behest
The prayers were answered, each thrice-blest;
 Since I was God!

My Infinite Self

In tune with every lark's unsullied song;
With disembodied spirits as they throng;
With harps of angels thrilled the air along;
I sing pure Me.

The mind of Me has purged within its ken
What things may seem impure to blinded men.
For I have sifted sins, and yet again;
No taint bear we.

Within the flower whose fragrance stintless flows;
Within the grain that flaunts its luscious rows;
Within the maiden's cheek which bards disclose;
I sense sweet Me.

The heart of Me pours forth its perfume rare
So lavish that the passer-by may share
Its fragrance hanging heavy on the air
At Love's decree.

Behind the hugely whirling cataract;
Behind the fierce tornado's wasting tact;
Behind the dread volcano, passion-racked;
I sway strong Me.

The might of Me in all its cosmic dower
Restrains itself, though cataclysms shower.
It fears to show a fraction of its power,
Lest men should flee.

Below the fens and bogs and black morass;
Below the viprous haunts our shudders pass;
Below the bowels of the earth so crass;
I sound deep Me.

The brain of Me has force to penetrate
The deepest problems of the nascent great;
And wrest thenceforth proud mastery of Fate,
Whate'er Fate be.

Above the clouds that lift their dreamy haze;
Above the stars that bend their earnest gaze;
Above the zenith of the solar blaze;
I vaunt high Me.

The Soul of Me transcends this realm of clay
And soars to where the light of endless day
Illumines them who to the Earthless pray;
From worlds set free.

Beyond the ocean's far horizon dim;
Beyond the setting sun's departing glim;
Beyond the limits we ascribe to Him;
 I spread vast Me.
The scope of Me is boundless, soundless, grand.
No being save my Soul vouchsafes command.
What distance Omnipresence may have spanned
 My eye can see.

Before the hills had heaped their bulging brow;
Before the waters might their banks endow;
Before the birth of Time's immortal Now;
 I trace prime Me.
The seed of Me—the Spirit's formless seed,
Existed in the hope that moulds the deed
A million years ere sprang this human breed
 As he and she.

Throughout the Manifest that men discern;
Throughout the Ether earthy mortals spurn;
Throughout the Love whence mind and matter turn;
 I laud Lord Me.
For I alone, the One Eternal I,
Both clot the clod and dome the cloud-flecked sky.
And thus at last the lowly with the high
 In Me agree.

For the Song's Own Sake

The Lark will warble sweetly whether humans hear or not
 To echo back a bird's unbounded joy;
The Rose will waft its fragrance to the drearest desert spot
 Where none may melt its breath to perfume coy.
My Soul must sing. I care not whether men applaud the song
 Or even sense it light on heavy ears;
My Heart must love. And if it cannot touch the human throng
 'Twill spend itself upon the distant spheres.

A Tottering Tripod

To build the creaking timbers of the place that we call home
 In some deep dell
 To treasure well
 The trinkets 'neath its dome;
Forgetting that the Infinite of which we form a part
 Pervades all Space,
 Too vast for Place—
 That narrows mind and heart;—

To twine our brief affections with a close tenacious grasp
 That cares for naught
 Save object sought—
 Some selfish human clasp;
And then when personality falls off—a shell outgrown
 To sob and sigh
 That friends must die
 And we be left alone;—

To measure Life and its success by Time's short-sighted span;
 To call Fate hard
 If she retard
 The making of a man;
And yet one thought, embosomed in the Limitless may lie
 A thousand years
 Ere it appears
 To such as you and I;—

To stand in fine upon this tripod tottering and frail
 Of Person, Place,
 And Time's scant grace;
 Then tremblingly to quail
When each support decays and falls, as finally it must;—
 This makes a worm
 That creeps infirm
 And crumbles back to dust.

To dwell unvalled, forever free amid the suns and stars;
 To stand unmoved
 Till Time has proved
 The wisdom of her scars;
To sense the Soul within the shell, to tear the mask from Death;
 And know that Life
 Transcends the strife
 Of fleeting human breath;

To give unstintingly one's best—all careless of result—
 And whether gain
 Be vast or vain,
Supremely to exult;
To love the Universe as one that human touch endears;—
 This makes a god
 That shall have trod
The circuit of the spheres.

The First Dream

A billion years ago
And then a billion more
Before the flux and flow
On ocean's rock-bound shore,
Ere suns began to rise
Or stars presumed to shine;
I owned the unformed skies—
The Universe was Mine.

And then I dreamed a dream
Amid My loneliness;
I saw the splendid gleam
Of suns I should possess,
The hum of world on world,
The prattle too of man,
As solar cycles whirled
Their orbits, span on span.

Though nothing had appeared
As yet to warrant Me
To hope My vision weird
Would ever surely be,
My hope still rose supreme
I knew no lack nor need—
For *Chaos was the dream*
And *Cosmos is the deed*.

I Am That I Am

You a human fill your mortal mind
Plethoric with facts you strain to find,
Heaping them within a mental rut
Darkening the sides whereof o'erjut

But—

I the Mindless, Universal Consciousness need not
Learning, reason, all the brain that men to them have got.

Men teach fact—I but act

Men would kneel—I would feel

Men must ask—I unmask

Through the endless cycles I have marked Me every spot.

You bestow your liking here and there
Making residence your crucial care;
Banished from your heath you pine and fret
On location all your longing set

Yet—

I, the All in All, the great I Am pervading space
Hide Me in the coarsest clod as in the flower's grace.

Friend and Foe—Joy and Woe

Smile and Tear—Hope and Fear

Peace and Strife—Death and Life

I abide the Soul of these, no matter what their face.

You must manufacture great machines
Even thence Achievement scantily gleans;
You before the product of your skill
Wax distraught till Time its measure fill

Still—

I the Deathless, I the Birthless, I the Changeless stand:
Planets melt and worlds dissolve in dust at My command.

Babes are born—homes left lorn

Fortunes gripped—beggars stripped

Kingdoms owned—kings dethroned

Mist is matter, matter mist, beneath My Cosmic Hand.

Mortal, bind you not with human chains;
Free your Soul from human wants and pains;
Picture you as pure as sunset tints,
See yourself reflected in their glints

Since—

I am You and You are I. Together we evolved;

Both from Formless Unity and back must be resolved.
Flee men's din—look within.
Just be You—boldly true.
Then and thus—deep in Us
Omniscience, Omnipresence and Omnipotence are solved.

Twilight

When the day is disappearing
And the shades of Night are nearing
And the distant hills are rearing
Their retreats of rest;
From the fragrant breezes thrilling
All my soul with rapture filling
I recall the hour stilling
That I love the best.

When the bells a-tinkle chiming
At the homing Twilight-timing
Tell the kine are slowly climbing
From the grass-clothed vale.
Then my spirit likewise soaring
Hears a chime whose swell outpouring
Keeps my quickened heart adoring
With its echo frail.

As the lads and maids returning
From their toil, I too am learning
That my brain must cease from earning
Its relentless wage.
Let my senses sinking, sleeping
Trust the airy spirits sweeping
Whence the angels, kindly keeping
Guard the day's new page.

Down beside the listening willows
Spreads the pool its placid pillows
Where its long-forgotten billows
Used to lash the deep.
There the water-lily lying
Proves how futile is my sighing
For the things whose ebb is dying
Ere the hour for sleep.

Though the mountain, mystic looming
Stands in peace forever dooming
Transient fears whose vain presuming
 Makes a man lose heart;
Firmer yet am I, abiding
Evermore to offer hiding
For the soul that comes confiding,
 Seeks a place apart.

Through the turmoil and collision
Of the Day I see a vision
Where a prospect Paradisian
 Wooes the soul to peace.
Through the silence and oppression
Of the Midnight's retrogression
Still that hour's clear confession
 Bids forebodings cease.

Human strife and human straining
For a profitless attaining
Must subside upon the waning
 Of the sun's bright ray;
For when once we cease to see them—
Earthy objects—we shall flee them,
From our earthless spirits free them,
 Things that thrall by day.

Make a truce with blind Ambition!
Let the Soul's more sane fruition
Prove once more a human's mission
 On this earth below.
Rest awhile among the flowers
Through the wondrous dreamy hours
Of the Twilight, that empowers
 More than mortals know.

Yet more dear than Nature's wooing
More intent than shades' pursuing
More sublime than gods' imbuing
 Comes a dream of one
Whose perfection sums Creation.
By her side my Soul's elation
Marks a great illumination
 Brighter than the sun.

If no reason e'er existed
For my sympathies enlisted
Save that you and I had trysted
 In the Twilight calm;
Still should I with tributes ringing
To the hour of spirits winging
Find my Soul the sweeter singing
 All of Life's glad psalm.

Hand in hand, my Sweetheart, roaming
Through the tender, peaceful gloaming,
This, Dear Love, is all the homing
 That my spirit needs.
What is sleep—with your embracing?
Love's oblivion effacing
Spreads a veil with magic lacing
 Whence new life proceeds.

Can an angel's evening blessing
Bring the thrill of your caressing
Which in transport I possessing
 Quiver through and through?
Is the hope of Heaven higher
Than the sum of my desire
That whatever you require
 I may be to you?

Can the Twilight's soft descending
Be more sweet than two souls blending
While together homeward wending
 To the realm of Love?
Sweetheart Mine, your loving taught me
When thus heavenward it caught me
More than Twilight ever brought me;
 More of things above.

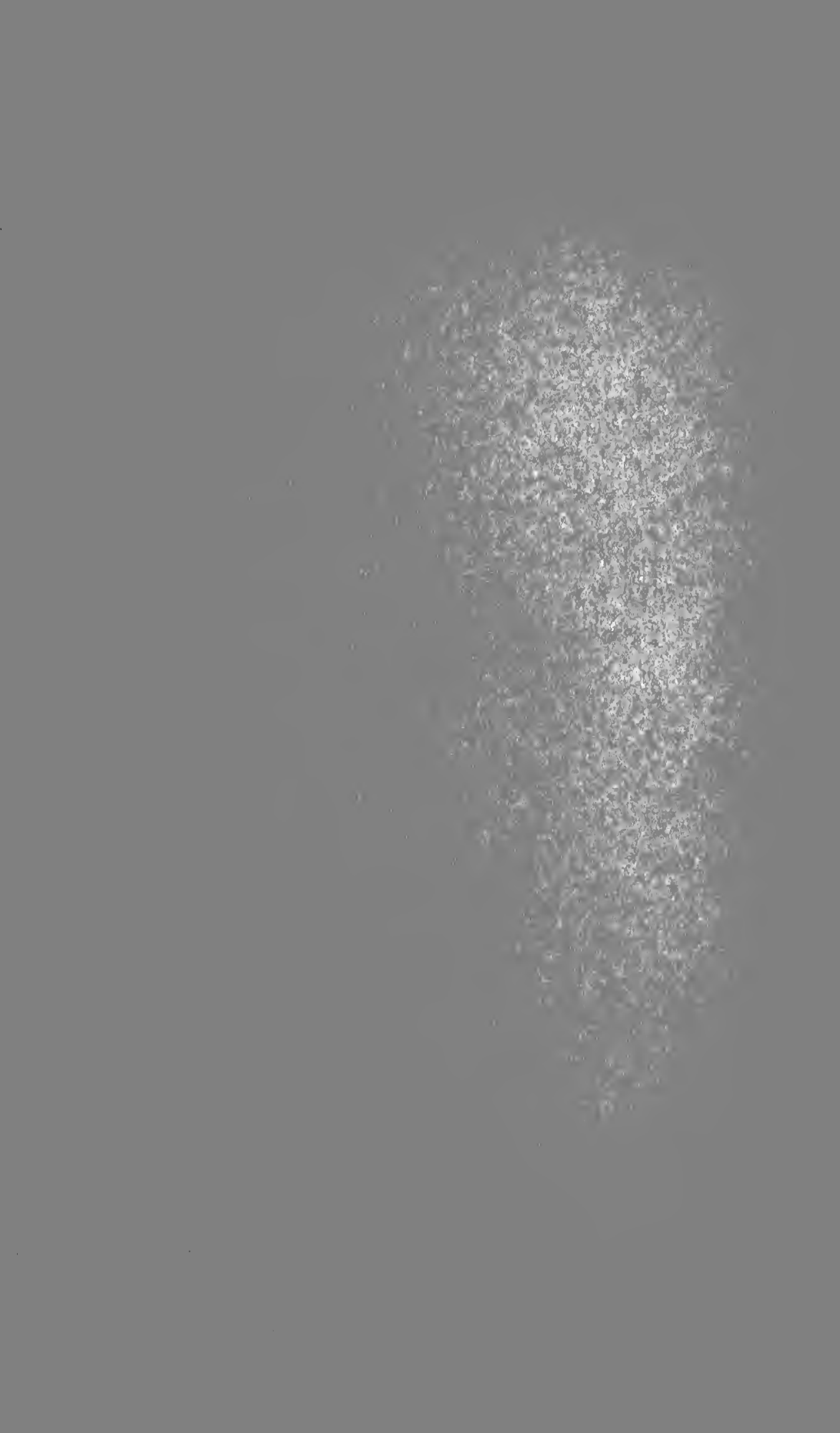
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A Beacon to Eternity

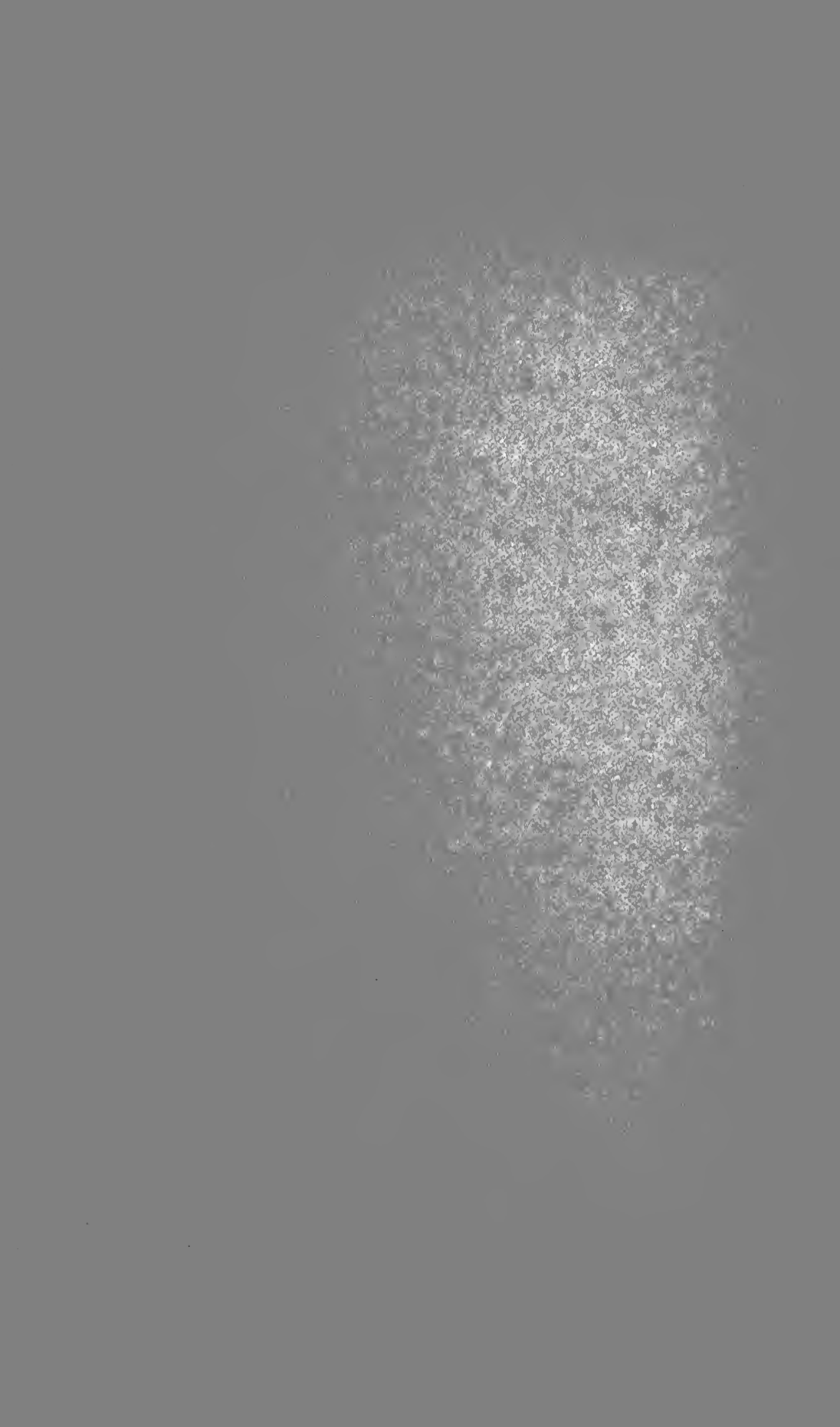
Upon a barren island stands
To light aloft the distant lands
A spiral tower that commands
 A clean horizon-vision.
But all its base lies drear and dark;
Where tiny creatures cold and stark
Permit their corpses' wake to mark
 A cruel tide's collision.

Far out along the trackless deep
Whose midnight storms relentless sweep
'Tis there the lights their vigil keep
 The jagged reefs defying.
Once perished full a thousand men
In total outer darkness, when
The Lighthouse held within its ken
 The creatures near it dying.

Along the distant line I loom.
Beside me creatures meet their doom;
I see them not—the outer gloom
 With wilder moaning beckons.
I light the shoreless, soundless Sea
That humans call Eternity.
And that is why the Soul of Me
 No mortal ever reckons.









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